

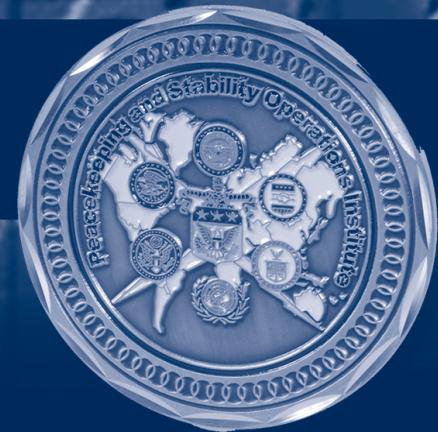


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# PKSOI Papers



## A CONTINUATION OF POLITICS BY OTHER MEANS: THE “POLITICS” OF A PEACEKEEPING MISSION IN CAMBODIA (1992-93)

Boraden Nhem

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**Boraden Nhem**

**February 2011**

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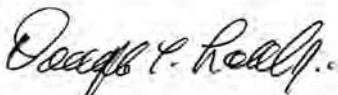
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## **FOREWORD**

PKSOI is pleased to present this monograph by Mr. Boraden Nhem. Mr. Nhem, a doctoral candidate, came to PKSOI to pursue his interest in peacekeeping. Particularly interested in the determining factors of success for peacekeeping missions, he has addressed a part of this with a fresh look at the United Nations (UN) Cambodian peacekeeping mission of 1992-93. His interests are academic but also motivated by personal experience—his childhood was spent in some of the worst years of fighting among factions, the implementation of the peacekeeping mission, and the rebuilding of the Cambodian government and society. Although he lived through this history, he has not fallen into the common trap of assuming his experience is the whole picture. This author has the unique ability to step back from his own life experience in order to investigate and make conclusions based upon the evidence he finds. He has done so in this paper.

Mr. Nhem has made a case that in past research scholars have ordinarily addressed subjects such as mandates, spoiler management policy, and UN missions as separate constructs and further have failed to address local political factors. His new Cambodian case study reveals a complex and interactive situation in which local political conditions were paramount and directly challenged the UN peacekeeping principle of neutrality. In fact, he observes that UN peacekeeping missions can be too tied to theory and doctrine and ignore reality. Instead, he argues for missions that understand the inherent complexity of peacekeeping, recognize emerging realities, and adapt accordingly.

This key observation can often be generalized to what the U.S. Army does as well.



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Operations Institute

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

BORADEN NHEM has conducted research at various research institutions in the field of security studies including the RAND Corporation and the Service Historique de la Défense (the French military archive maintained by the Ministry of Defense). He is an alumni of the “Summer Workshop on Analysis of Military Operations and Strategy (SWAMOS) 2010,” organized by Columbia University, with Dr. Stephen Biddle as one of the directing faculty. Mr. Nhem has one publication forthcoming with Praeger Security International. The book will study the evolution of the Khmer Rouge from a mere terrorist organization to an insurgency, eventually taking power, and then back to insurgency before its ultimate demise in 1998. His research interests include the use of force in international politics and the question of war and peace. Mr. Nhem holds a BA in Economics and Law from the Royal University of Law and Economics in Cambodia, a Maîtrise in Economics from Université Lumière Lyon 2 in France, and a master’s degree from the University of Delaware in the United States. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate in political science and strategic studies at the University of Delaware.



## SUMMARY

Since the establishment of the United Nations (UN) in 1945, 63 peacekeeping missions have been authorized by UN mandate. Some fell directly under the UN, and others were conducted under UN authorization by lead nations. The mandates have been justified under UN Charter VI, “Pacific Settlement of Disputes,” and Chapter VII, “Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression.”<sup>1</sup> Regardless of intent, the UN record in peacekeeping is one of mixed success. Numerous reasons for the failed or less than successful peacekeeping missions are offered: vague or weak mandates, conflicting objectives, ambiguous rules of engagement (ROE), and unanticipated spoilers rank high among these. This paper uses the UN Cambodian peacekeeping mission of 1992-93, considered a great success by many, to examine the complexities involved in UN peacekeeping missions and to illustrate the primacy of the political context in determining success.

Peacekeeping is a civil-military operation on the UN’s Spectrum of Peace and Security Activities. Whereas conflict prevention uses structural or diplomatic measures to preclude conflict within or among states, peacemaking applies measures, usually diplomatic, to bring hostile parties to fruitful negotiations. Peacekeeping missions aim to prevent the resumption of fighting by guaranteeing security for the parties of the conflict until a foundation for resolving the conflict and a sustainable peace is laid. It generally involves the separation of forces, the laying down of arms by the belligerents, the reintegration of the belligerents into society, and the facilitation of the resumption of

a degree of normalcy within society. Recent conflicts with their almost wanton disregard of human rights and mistreatment of civilians have made the protection of civilians a key component of the peace process. Peace enforcement is an operation where coercive measures, including the use of threat of military force, are used to restore international peace and security. Peace-building, the last component of the operational spectrum, uses a range of measures to reduce the risk of a relapse into conflict and is a long-term process focused on a sustainable peace. While these operations are distinct in doctrine, the measures and actions used in application and issues confronted often appear similar. Nonetheless, the purpose of each operation is distinct, even as all seek to create peace and stability.

While peacekeeping has evolved, it remains distinct and useful as an operational concept along the spectrum of peace and security activities. However, it is not without its conceptual liabilities. Historically and today, peacekeeping operations adhere to three basic principles: (1) consent of the parties, (2) impartiality, and (3) nonuse of force except in self-defense—and more recently the defense of the mandate. The first predicates the mission and its success on the consent of the main parties to the conflict and their commitment to a political process and support of the UN force. The second argues that retaining consent is based on implementing the mandate without favor or prejudice to any party. The last principle has evolved from an absolute policy of no use of force except in self-defense to a more realistic reflection of the authorization of the use of force to deter attempts to undermine the peace process with force and to protect civilians. The Cambodian experience reveals how these liabilities affect the progress of peace.

The UN peacekeeping mission in Cambodia between 1992 and 1993 (the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia [UNTAC]) is an excellent precursor of the growing complexity of 21st century peacekeeping. While it has been studied before, there are two main problems with the literature and practice in peacekeeping operations that it highlights.

First, at the theoretical level, while a peacekeeping operation is a complex phenomenon with many different variables involved, scholars in the past have tended to use mono-causal theories to explain the success and failure of peacekeeping missions. Works that address the complexities of the interactions among the many variables are quite rare. Moreover, the debate has turned to what good mandates are and maintaining peace versus protection of civilians, rather than how to accomplish the overarching goal of all mandates which is a sustainable peace.

Second, at the practical level, much attention has been paid to the establishment of good guiding principles and optimal ROE for peacekeepers, but much less attention has been given to how political components of the mission should integrate with military components in the complex environment of peacekeeping. Integration is ad hoc, too often responding to each new problem, as opposed to shaping the situation proactively.

In Cambodia, UNTAC confronted the full complexity of peacekeeping as the Cold War mechanisms for stability collapsed and the UN struggled with the new order. All the variables and nuances of 21st century peacekeeping were present from vague mandates to spoilers and their patrons. Previous studies of the Cambodian peacekeeping mission have been too

myopic and fail to address important matters contributing to a valid assessment of whether or not UNTAC met its mandates. Many of the works also differ in their conclusions, and there is a need to integrate and compare these efforts to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the UNTAC mission's strengths and weaknesses. Cambodia was largely a successful operation, and as a case study continues to provide important insights as to what constitutes best practices in peacekeeping missions.

UN peacekeeping missions always have external and internal political components. The situation in Cambodia at the time of the UN intervention was complicated and had been so for years. The conflicting parties agreed to a UN peacekeeping mission because they recognized that they could not resolve the political paradox in which Cambodia found itself, and no one was happy with the status quo. Foreign interventions had played a contributing role in Cambodia's turmoil, but the paradox was purely Cambodian. Negotiations were necessary because no party by itself could successfully govern in Cambodia.

In hindsight, some of the difficulties and failures of the operation could have been foreseen with a more careful consideration of the external and internal context. In this regard, no theoretical or doctrinal construct should ignore the emerging realities on the ground and must adapt to the new circumstances. In its revelation of the complex and interactive nature and centrality of local political conditions, the Cambodian case study suggests a number of important premises for future peacekeeping doctrine to consider.

## **ENDNOTES - SUMMARY**

1. "Charter of the United Nations," *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines*, New York: United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 2006, pp. 13-14, available from [www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml).



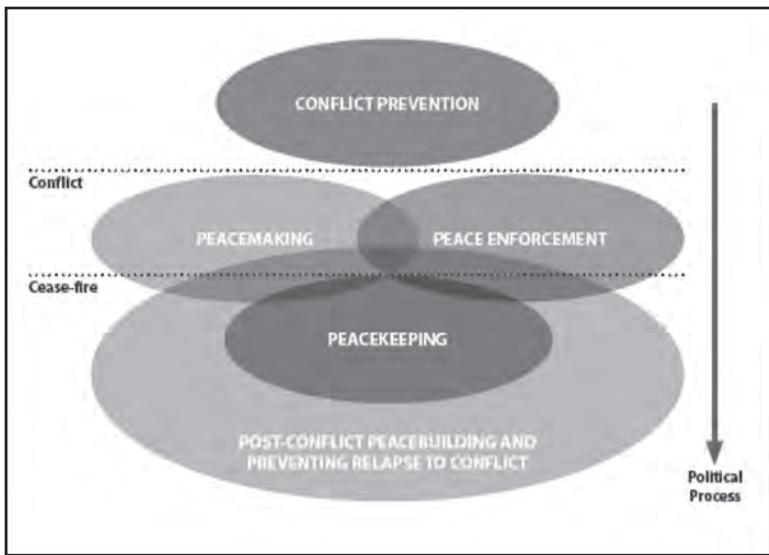
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**INTRODUCTION**

Since the establishment of the United Nations (UN) in 1945, 63 peacekeeping missions have been authorized by UN mandate. Some fell directly under the UN, and others were conducted under UN authorization by lead nations. The mandates have been justified under the UN Charter’s Chapter VI, “Pacific Settlement of Disputes,” and Chapter VII, “Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression.”<sup>1</sup> The protection of civilians is an inherent component of the UN Charter founded in the Human Rights Declaration, but it is only in more recent years that it has been elevated to a major component of peacekeeping. Regardless of intent, the UN record in peacekeeping is one of mixed success. Numerous reasons for the failed or less than successful peacekeeping missions are offered: vague or weak mandates, conflicting objectives, ambiguous rules of engagement (ROE), and unanticipated spoilers rank high among these. This paper uses the UN Cambodian peacekeeping mission of 1992-93, considered a great success by many, to examine the complexities involved in UN peacekeeping missions and to illustrate the primacy of the political context in determining success.

## THE COMPLEXITY OF THE PEACEKEEPING MISSION

Peacekeeping is a civil-military operation on the UN's Spectrum of Peace and Security Activities. Whereas **conflict prevention** uses structural or diplomatic measures to preclude conflict within or among states and **peacemaking** applies measures, usually diplomatic, to bring hostile parties to fruitful negotiations, **peacekeeping missions** aim to prevent the resumption of fighting by guaranteeing security for parties to the conflict until a foundation for resolving the reasons for the conflict and a sustainable peace is laid. It generally involves the separation of forces, the laying down of arms by the belligerents, the reintegration of the belligerents into society, and the facilitation of the resumption of a degree of normalcy within society. Recent conflicts, with their almost wanton disregard of human rights and mistreatment of civilians, have made the protection of civilians a key component of the peace process. **Peace enforcement** is an operation where coercive measures, including military force, are used to restore international peace and security. **Peace-building**, the last component of the operational spectrum, uses a range of measures to reduce the risk of a relapse into conflict and is a long-term process focused on a sustainable peace. While these operations are distinct in doctrine, the measures and actions used in application and the issues confronted often appear similar. Nonetheless, the purpose of each operation is distinct even as all seek to create peace and stability.<sup>2</sup> Figure 1 illustrates these operations and components.



**Figure 1. UN Spectrum of Peace and Security Operations.**

Traditionally, UN peacekeeping operations were considered to be essentially military in character and focused on the tasks of (1) observation, monitoring, and reporting; (2) supervision of ceasefire agreements and support of the verifying mechanisms; and (3) acting as a buffer between forces and as a confidence-building measure. Today, the scope has broadened significantly and includes multidimensional functions:

- Create a secure and stable environment while strengthening the state's ability to provide security, with full respect for the rule of law and human rights;
- Facilitate the political process by promoting dialogue and reconciliation, and supporting the establishment of legitimate and effective institutions of governance;

- Provide a framework ensuring that all UN and other international actors pursue their activities at the country-level in a coherent and coordinated manner.<sup>3</sup>

While peacekeeping has evolved, it remains distinct and useful as an operational concept along the spectrum of peace and security activities. However, it is not without its conceptual liabilities. Historically and today, peacekeeping operations adhere to three basic principles: (1) consent of the parties, (2) impartiality, and (3) nonuse of force except in self-defense—and, more recently, defense of the mandate. The first predicates the mission and its success on the consent of the main parties to the conflict and their commitment to a political process and support of the UN force. The second argues that retaining consent is based on implementing the mandate without favor or prejudice to any party. The last principle has evolved from an absolute policy of no use of force except in self defense to a more realistic position, which authorizes the use of force to deter attempts to undermine the peace process and to protect civilians.

Yet key questions of strategic importance remain in regards to these principles and their application in the complex real world. What is the role of civilian leadership? What constitutes consent and how does it manifest itself? Does retreat from consent in actions or stated policy of one of the major parties end the mission? What are the implications of the lack of consent of lesser parties to the conflict or others who seek advantages out of the conflict for the UN operation? What does impartiality mean? Does impartiality imply neutrality? If not, how can you prove impartiality? What is the role of force and how do you control it?

Can peace actually be kept without some willingness to proactively enforce the mandate—and is the “defense of the mandate” sufficient enough to facilitate the movement toward a sustainable peace? Or stated differently, does every peacekeeping mission have an inherent potential to transition to a peace enforcement mission, and if so, should that transition process be considered prior to committing to the peacekeeping mission? Last, but not least, when should a peacekeeping mission end? This paper seeks to provide insights in answer to these questions.

Four dimensions serve as a useful framework for understanding UN policy in peacekeeping operations: mandates, civil-military integration, ROE, and spoiler policy. Not surprisingly, these four components center on the major issues associated with successful peacekeeping. Even though these four components interact with each other to determine the outcome of a peacekeeping mission, they have invariably been addressed separately in previous literature. As a result, most critiques focus on one dimension of the peacekeeping mission at a time and fail to fully appreciate the incongruities and synergies inherent in the interaction among the four.

## **The Mandate.**

The UN Security Council (UNSC) mandate is perhaps the most important component of a peacekeeping mission. It sets the objectives, responsibilities, and specific tasks for the peacekeepers. It both empowers the peacekeepers and limits what they can do. The mandate establishes the legitimacy of the mission in the eyes of international and local actors. It is a negoti-

ated document that, by its nature, must be acceptable to the members of the UNSC and the major parties to the conflict. Since such operations deploy in support of a cease-fire or peace agreement, they are obviously reflective of the nature and content of the agreement by the parties to the conflict. Less obvious, but no less important, mandates are also shaped by broader debates ongoing in the international environment. These may include social issues such as gender rights or children and armed conflict,<sup>4</sup> but also may be influenced by the regional and global ideological and power interests of others. Getting an agreement on a mandate is not easy and its implementation is even more difficult because everyone's circumstances change over time. Consequently, the interpretation of objectives and responsibilities and what tasks are appropriate is subject to continuing debate. In implementation, the legitimacy and credibility afforded the mission by the mandate are critical.

In theory, it is quite simple. The mission needs to be empowered by the international community and accepted by the conflicting parties to be successful. The mandate must emphasize agreement of the parties and impartiality of the peacekeepers in order to obtain the consent of the various parties to the conflict; and said impartiality, it is assumed, will keep all the parties happy. However, impartiality in the face of the reality confronted once on the ground is much more complicated.

It is imperative that the parties to the conflict believe that the peacekeepers have the backing of the international community, and both the capabilities and will to implement the mandate impartially. In peacekeeping operations, these beliefs allow the fighting to stop, and demobilization to occur. In a situation where

two or more parties seek to disarm, the questions of who will disarm, when, and how, is paramount since the last to be armed may seek obvious advantages—a classic security dilemma.<sup>5</sup> Without confidence in the legitimacy, credibility, and impartiality of the peacekeepers, the major parties to the conflict can seldom accept the risk of laying down their arms. Of these, impartiality may be the most difficult to sustain.

Although impartiality is a very simple concept, its application is not so simple. There are several schools of thought on how one should understand impartiality. First, according to one view, as reflected in the current UN doctrine, impartiality while difficult is achievable and necessary. It maintains the consent and cooperation of the parties. Any lack of impartiality, or even the perception of such, undermines the legitimacy and credibility of the mission. In this view, the goal is even-handedness to preclude becoming or being perceived as one of the belligerents. While this latest doctrine argues for impartiality, it is not an argument for neutrality with regards to the mandate. Impartiality suggests unbiased intervention to enforce the mandate, whereas neutrality would imply nonintervention in local affairs regardless of the mandate. Apart from the legitimacy and credibility issues, this view reflects the belief that it is hard for peacekeepers to pick the “right” side *a priori*.<sup>6</sup> As a result, it advocates that peacekeepers place a premium on impartiality.

A second school of thought dismisses impartiality as an appropriate principle for peacekeepers, mainly because its advocates believe impartiality does little to resolve a conflict.<sup>7</sup> Political scientist Richard Betts argues that impartiality, combined with only limited military actions, is a recipe for disaster. In Betts’ judg-

ment, a counterproductive tension exists between impartiality concerns and active intervention in peacekeeping. On the one hand, being impartial entails some limited intervention in cases where a party to the conflict seeks to gain fraudulent advantage. On the other hand, if such interventions are unnaturally limited by impartiality concerns, then they would lack sufficient force and credibility to encourage local actors to favor peaceful resolution. Logically, in these circumstances, parties to the conflict would constantly test peacekeepers to gain advantages, knowing that such actions will not be significantly punished. Betts advocates allowing peacekeepers to take over everything; then, since they control everything, they might be able to impartially resolve the conflict. However, such an unlimited intervention might be better seen as closer to peace enforcement than peacekeeping on the spectrum of peace and security activities.<sup>8</sup>

Another school of thought considers impartiality as being subjective. Although the official UN doctrine fully embraces impartiality, many practitioners, including some Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSG), view impartiality more practically. Doctrinally, every SRSG is expected to achieve impartiality, but, in practice, impartiality is difficult to attain. As one former SRSG lamented, sometimes, “impartiality is in the eyes of the beholder: if you do what he wants, then you are impartial; if you do not, then you are biased and not to be trusted.”<sup>9</sup> Efforts to be impartial are open to subjective interpretation and often intentionally misconstrued by the various parties for political purposes. Some measures are openly challenged to test the SRSG, while others are often manipulated to increase the apparent legitimacy of a certain actor’s policy by suggesting that the SRSG’s re-

sponse, or failure to respond, is an act of endorsement for certain actors' activities or statements. In such cases, although the offending actors' positions are demonstrably untrue, it is still difficult for the SRSG to overcome their consequences once they have played out in the public arena.<sup>10</sup>

Mandates are political documents that are products of what the international community, represented by the UNSC and the parties to the conflict, can agree on with regards to objectives, responsibilities, and specific tasks for the peacekeepers. The mandate establishes the framework in which the mission can work, but it also creates the parameters in which the parties to the conflict and spoilers may maneuver. Peacekeeping as an operational concept is predicated on the principles of consent of the parties, and impartiality. If consent is not sufficiently sincere by the parties throughout the operation, peacekeeping is inherently problematic. In a similar manner, the subjectivity of impartiality and its susceptibility to manipulation challenge its validity as an operational concept. Logically, then, peace enforcement may appear a better option for intervention. Yet, enforcement poses its own problems. It is harder to get political consensus for such intervention, and it is more difficult to get troop and resource commitments from UN members. In addition, calls for peace enforcement, except for the most adverse situations, challenge the unity of the UN and the validity of the UNSC with uncomfortable questions in regard to sovereignty and legitimacy. As a result, the UN relies on consent and impartiality as principles that allow it to act as guarantor of security as opposed to a peace enforcer; but the tensions implicit in these principles make the selection of mission leadership crucial.

## **Civil-Military Integration.**

In the post-Cold War environment, peacekeeping is more multidimensional. Peacekeeping operations confront numerous problems with roots in socio-economic and cultural issues, as well as political and military ones. Usually these problems occur simultaneously and are interrelated, hence requiring a multidimensional integrated approach and solution.<sup>11</sup> Effective leadership is critical in deciding how to approach these complex civil-military operations, and even more so in conducting an ongoing operation. Yet, civil-military relations are often strained and the source of discord.

Some of the difficulty can be attributed to the scope of the undertaking and typical issues of interagency coordination and planning. Organizational, cultural, and practice differences between the military and other governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are well documented. In addition, the international composition of UN operations adds a layer of complexity to planning overall and the specific details of operations. It is fair to conclude that although the SRSG is supposed to be in charge of all UN components, in practice the SRSG's overarching role is tentative at best in such a complex environment. Nonetheless, effective leadership at the top is the key to successful peace operations.

Most SRSGs lament that, even though on paper they are head of the mission, they have to spend an inordinate amount of time in overseeing the military component. The task is complicated by the fact that the UN does not actually own any military forces and, no matter the issue, military commanders tend to look to their own governments for political guidance and

confirmation of UN directives. Sometimes missions are disrupted by these dual channels of command, as in the case of a contributing country withdrawing its military forces following a scandalous allegation by a UN Liberian operation commander who never consulted the SRSG.<sup>12</sup> The symbiotic relationship of a military unit or member and its/his nation-state is a powerful bond that cannot be easily broken and is always at play in UN peace operations.

### **The Use of Force and Rules of Engagement.**

Peacekeepers deploy to facilitate the end of a conflict and to allay its potential resurgence, not to participate in the fighting. To uphold the mandate, which usually stipulates impartiality, peacekeepers' military actions are logically constrained. Peacekeeping differs from conventional warfare in that in conventional war, the aim is to impose your will on the adversary by defeating his military. In order to do this, the military force is the primary instrument, and it achieves political objectives by its actual or threatened use of force. If the objectives are important enough, the force used is limited only by the capabilities at hand. In peacekeeping, the role of UN military forces is to help the parties of a conflict reach a negotiated peace. UN military forces help create the conditions that keep combative forces separated, allow the consenting parties to adhere to the agreed conditions of the mandate, and encourage a consensus for a sustained peace. Peacekeeping missions pose two sizable issues for the use of force. First, most of the military forces the UN relies on are forces of member countries that are primarily trained in conventional warfare, and whose military cultural core is conventional combat. Second, in an

environment of consent and impartiality, the wrong use of force by peacekeepers – too little, too much, too biased, too freely, or simply wrongly – destroys the trust and confidence among the belligerents required for success.

The UN principle for the use of force is nonuse of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate.<sup>13</sup> The crucial questions are: When should force be applied, what level of force should be applied, and how can this level be controlled? Ultimately, answers to these questions lead to ROE that inform military commanders and soldiers what they can do.

Chapter VII of the UN Charter defines conditions under which the UN can use force to safeguard international peace and security.<sup>14</sup> The wording of Chapter VII is purposefully broad and general enough to provide flexibility in its application so as to be relevant in unforeseen circumstances and keep implementation decisions within the contemporary political environment. Consequently, the provisions on the use of force represent principles that could be agreed on in general, but they are not specific regarding doctrine, tactics, or ROE. Without such specificity, doctrine and tactics are left to the discretion of the field commanders, who tend to have greater preparation in conducting conventional warfare. Moreover, in the international complexity of the designation of commanders and forces in the UN environment, it is possible that the commanders may be of a different nationality and come from differing organizational cultures than the units subordinate to them. Furthermore, since political expediency often creates a need to rotate the senior military command positions among contributing states, use of force can also be complicated by the change of commanders.

Historical problems with the use of force and the changing conditions of a post-Cold War international order have resulted in recent codifying of UN peacekeeping doctrine. A capstone doctrine manual, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines*, adds the phrase “defense of the mandate” to the traditional self-defense-only mentality of UN peacekeeping. Recognizing the inherent weakness in regards to use of force in traditional peacekeeping, it advocates “robust peacekeeping,” which is the same as traditional peacekeeping, except the proactive use of force is allowed in defense of the mandate.<sup>15</sup>

Consequently, the use of all necessary means is permitted at the tactical level to deter spoilers or defeat other attempts to undermine the peace process. Such use of force must be authorized by the UNSC and with consent of major parties to the conflict, suggesting that some marginal groups’ rights of consent are ignored. Robust peacekeeping is different from peace enforcement in that the latter allows force to be used with no consent from any parties to the conflict, and may be applied to anyone challenging UN authority. Yet a dilemma remains: This capstone document stresses that peacekeeping by the UN is never intended to be an enforcement mechanism.<sup>16</sup> Logically, then, the use of force, even under defense of the mandate, must take into consideration even more carefully local factors and politics. Additionally, the expanded principle makes getting the appropriate ROE right and overcoming the inherent national cultural and organizational differences among UN forces even more important. While self-defense has a more common military heritage, defense of the mandate invites multiple interpretations of ROE and new challenges in command and resourcing at all levels.

This interpretation problem reveals itself when challenges to the peace operations mandate surface. The main task of peacekeepers is to provide reassurance for the consenting parties to a conflict who are confronted by security dilemmas and uncertainty during the transition period to a stable peace. An underlying assumption of peacekeeping is that the pursuit of peace is genuine. When this assumption is challenged by any actor, whether one of the consenting parties or not, four doctrinal options are available to peacekeepers in dealing with the challenge: nonuse of force (military observers), restricted use of force, necessary use of force, and forceful response. To complicate matters further, two among the four possibilities are, in themselves, ambiguous: What is considered restricted, and when is an action necessary? Vague mandates and poor or convoluted leadership practices contribute to the problem because they invite spoiler challenges, increasing the volatility of the peacekeeping environment.

The international debate on protection of civilians in armed conflict also influences the use of force by peacekeepers. In the past, in many cases, peacekeepers were ambivalent regarding their mission when civilians were under imminent and actual threat of physical violence. Most peacekeepers prized the principle of impartiality so high—or found it so convenient or confusing—that they refused to get involved in situations where violence appeared like local fighting. In a bizarre example from 1994, U.S. Soldiers stood idly by while the former members of the Haitian military beat people up for cheering at the arrival of U.S. forces.<sup>17</sup> In much more grim cases, such as the Ituri Incidence, the UN Organization and Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) mission

in the Congo, and the Rwanda Genocide, peacekeepers failed to act to protect civilians when the need was obvious. Most, if not all, military peacekeepers in these incidents tell the same story, saying they could not intervene unless they were shot at. Today, protection of civilians is a specific consideration in the development of the mandate.<sup>18</sup>

The obvious reason UN doctrine does not list types of ROE for specific conditions is that each peacekeeping operation's conditions are unique and evolve as the operation progresses. Hence, it is impossible to generalize about a unique set of ROE. It is possible to list ROE in mandates based on a pre-mission assessment, but, as conditions change, such mandated ROE may become hamstringing as opposed to helpful. ROE need to be a living set of rules that are applicable and responsive to the existing circumstances and can evolve with them. An informed collaboration among the senior military commander and the SRSG offers the best hope, but such a solution depends on clear authorities, superior leadership on the part of both, and the subordination of personalities and national proclivities at all levels.

## **Spoilers.**

Left to themselves, the vagueness in mandates, the strain of civil-military relations, and the ambiguities of ROE in an atmosphere of genuine consent and impartiality might nevertheless achieve a lasting peace in a reasonable manner. In the Cold War stability, a semi-peace was sometimes imposed by the superpowers, or, as was more often the case, hostilities were suspended indefinitely under the rubric of UN peace operations to sustain global stability. However, such an

idyllic environment is not possible today. Challengers abound in today's peace operations environments, and how to deal with these spoilers of the peace process is a major consideration of policy.

In a classic study of such spoilers, Stephen John Stedman defines spoilers as "leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it."<sup>19</sup> Such persons or groups may or may not be part of the consenting parties, and any consent may or may not have been genuine at the time the UN mandate was negotiated. Spoilers may be motivated by their own internal interests, but they may also be motivated by external patrons. He argues that there are different types of spoilers who can be categorized and understood based on whether their objectives are total, limited, or greedy.<sup>20</sup> The differing objectives, he argues, create different behaviors and require different solutions. Total spoilers have non-negotiable goals such as imposition of a radical ideology or radically changing an existing society. Such total spoilers cannot be negotiated with and must be excluded from or marginalized within the peace process. Limited spoilers have limited goals such as the redress of grievances or other measures of social justice. They do not demand the radical change of society, nor are they driven by a radical ideology. Nevertheless, they may use radical means to achieve their objectives. Stedman maintains that they can be accommodated within the peace process if their demands, which are acceptable in contrast to those of total spoilers', are addressed. Finally, greedy spoilers lie between these two extremes and their goals can expand or contract based on their cost-benefit calculations. These latter spoilers, Stedman reasons, can be

forced into the peace process by understanding and manipulating their calculations.<sup>21</sup>

Spoilers play important, and often destructive, roles in the peace process. Dealing with spoilers requires complex decisionmaking and an understanding of the nature of the groups, their motivation, ideology, objectives, and how and with what resources they are pursuing them. The most useful way of looking at Stedman's contribution is to use his typology as ideal-types to help understand and discuss what the role of spoilers in the peace process is and how to counter or use it in successful peacekeeping. As spoilers' positions will vary along the way, they require constant assessment and evaluation that leads to appropriate solutions for a particular context.

### **The Complexity of the Peacekeeping Mission in Cambodia.**

The UN peacekeeping mission in Cambodia between 1992 and 1993, the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), was an excellent precursor of the growing complexity of 21st century peacekeeping. While it has been studied before, there are two main problems with the literature and practice in peacekeeping operations that it highlights.

First, at the theoretical level, although peacekeeping operations are complex phenomena with many different variables involved, scholars in the past have tended to use mono-causal theories to explain the success and failure of peacekeeping missions. Works that address the complexities of the interaction among the many variables are quite rare. Moreover, the debate has turned to what good mandates are, and maintaining peace versus protection of civilians, rather than how to accomplish the overarching goal of all

mandates which is a sustainable peace. Second, at the practical level, much attention has been paid to the establishment of good guiding principles and optimal ROE for peacekeepers, but much less attention has been given to how political components of the mission should integrate with military components in the complex environment of peacekeeping. Integration is ad hoc, too often responding to each new problem, as opposed to shaping the situation proactively.

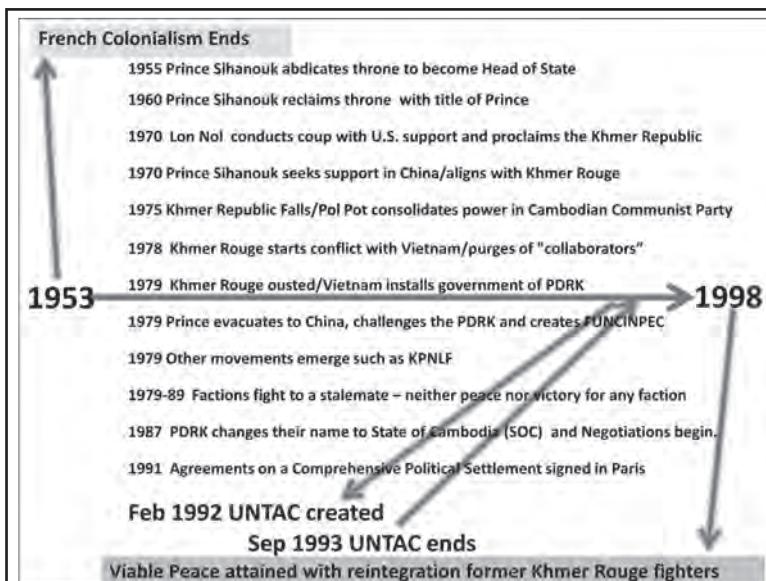
The UNTAC confronted the full complexity of peacekeeping as the Cold War mechanisms for stability collapsed, and the UN struggled with the new order. All the variables and nuances of 21st century peacekeeping were present from vague mandates to spoilers and their patrons. Previous studies of the Cambodian peacekeeping mission have been too myopic, and have failed to address important matters contributing to a valid assessment of whether or not the UNTAC met its mandates. Many of the works also differ in their conclusions, and there is a need to integrate and compare these efforts to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the UNTAC mission's strengths and weaknesses. Cambodia was largely a successful operation, and, as a case study, continues to provide important insights as to what constitutes best practices in peacekeeping missions.

## **THE CAMBODIAN CIVIL WAR IN OVERVIEW**

### **Background of the Conflict.**

Cambodia gained independence from France in 1953. As a young king installed as a puppet by the French, Prince Norodom Sihanouk sought freedom from colonial rule and a constitutional monarchy.

As a leader in the independence movement, Prince Sihanouk became an enduring and controversial figurehead of Cambodian politics. In 1955, he abdicated his throne in favor of his father and became Head of State where he thought the real power lay. On his father's death 5 years later, he reclaimed the throne but kept the title of prince and head of state for which he was thereafter known. Although much revered by his people, Prince Sihanouk's role as head of Cambodian politics coupled with a policy of international neutrality at a time when the Vietnam War escalated worked against him. On March 17, 1970, while Prince Sihanouk was out of the country, Prime Minister Lon Nol and a right-wing cabal with American support carried out a military coup which abolished the monarchy and proclaimed the Khmer Republic (see Figure 2).<sup>22</sup>



**Figure 2. Sequence of Main Events.**

Forced out of Cambodian politics, Prince Sihanouk sought allies to assist him in a return to power. He found his support in China and in an uneasy alliance with the Khmer Rouge, the Cambodian communist party, which was once his bitter enemy. As a result of Sihanouk's popularity and the constant bombing of Cambodia by the U.S. Air Force, wave after wave of peasants joined the Khmer Rouge.<sup>23</sup> After 5 years of fighting a losing war, the Khmer Republic fell in 1975. Although the Khmer Rouge benefited immeasurably from Prince Sihanouk's popularity, they never trusted him, and their leader had his own plans for Cambodia. The Prince's popularity among the people was a constant threat to these plans. After they took power, the Khmer Rouge conferred upon Prince Sihanouk the nominal title of Chief of State but gave him no real power and confined the Prince in his palace. As such, he gave the regime legitimacy; however, he did not participate in actual governance. Such harsh treatment added to the mistrust between the Prince and the Khmer Rouge leadership.<sup>24</sup>

The Khmer Rouge's real leader, Saloth Sar, also known in the Cambodian communist party as "brother number one," is internationally recognized by his infamous name, Pol Pot.<sup>25</sup> Consolidating his power within the Cambodian Communist Party, he embarked on a campaign to deurbanize Cambodian society immediately after the Khmer Rouge took over Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia. Building a cult following around himself, killing perhaps as many as two million people, he ultimately created the conditions that would topple his short-lived and cruel regime. With its historical anti-Vietnamese ideology and its use of the fear of group extinction, the Khmer Rouge started the conflict with Vietnam in 1978. Small skirmishes

and raids were conducted against Vietnamese border towns and the Khmer Rouge was never shy about massacring Vietnamese civilians. Small battles occasionally broke out between the Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese Army.<sup>26</sup>

In 1978, Pol Pot ordered a purge of the Communist Party members in the Eastern Zone, where anti-Vietnamese campaigns were routinely conducted against potential collaborators with the Vietnamese communists. Many commanders in the eastern zone were killed during the purge and others fled to Vietnam. In December 1978, the Vietnamese army, along with elements of the former Eastern Zone commanders who had fled Pol Pot's purge the previous year, responded to the Khmer Rouge attacks with a large-scale armored operation. The operation ousted the Khmer Rouge on January 7, 1979, but Pol Pot and remnants of his followers survived and escaped. Fighting alongside the Vietnamese main units were cadres of the former Eastern Zone commands who had survived the purge. Vietnam then installed a government that mainly consisted of these cadres. Along with some former officials under Prince Sihanouk's regime, they became the main leadership elements of the new People's Democratic Republic of Kampuchea (PDRK). Following the January 1979 victory, the United States and its allies refused to allow the new Vietnamese-backed government to be seated in the UN and in a strange, dark twist of fate, the Khmer Rouge retained the seat.<sup>27</sup>

Equally bizarre, the Vietnamese attempted a commando operation to rescue Prince Sihanouk in hopes of lending the new government legitimacy with the people; however, the attempt failed and the Prince was evacuated to China shortly before Phnom Penh fell. He would later emerge to challenge the PDRK.

After the defeat in 1979, the Khmer Rouge retreated to the jungle-clad northern part of the country and continued to resist the Vietnamese presence. Despite the Khmer Rouge's past intrigues and atrocities, Prince Sihanouk persisted in his belief that the Vietnamese presence was the greater threat to Cambodian independence. Prince Sihanouk was willing to work with the Khmer Rouge once again, but this time he had his own movement and army called the *Front Unis National pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique, Et Coopératif* (National United Front for Cambodian Independence, Neutral, Peaceful, and Free [FUNCINPEC]). Other small movements also emerged, the most significant of which was the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) led by Son Sann, a former prime minister under Prince Sihanouk. The United States continued to oppose the Vietnamese occupation and provided aid to those opposing the Vietnamese presence. The resulting conflict is known as the third Indochinese Conflict.<sup>28</sup>

From 1979 to 1989, these factions fought each other to a stalemate. The most powerful army among the belligerents was that of the Phnom Penh government, which received weapons and training from other socialist countries. The PDRK also possessed a large and efficient civilian bureaucracy and struggled to rebuild Cambodia in the middle of a war and amidst international opposition (economic sanctions were imposed by Western countries, supported by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN], as a measure to force Vietnam to leave Cambodia), but PDRK Prime Minister Hun Sen realized that the war could not be ended by military means alone, and believed talks with Prince Sihanouk would be necessary to find a sustainable peace. As a gesture of renouncing the social-

ist ideology, the PDRK changed its name to the State of Cambodia (SOC) just prior to the start of the peace negotiations. Hun Sen and his allies organized as the Cambodian People's Party (CPP). Negotiations began in 1987, culminating in the Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict, signed in Paris on October 23, 1991. This agreement was the foundation of the UNTAC's mandate for peacekeeping in Cambodia. As an interim measure, an advance mission, the UN Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC) was established immediately after the signing of the Agreements in October 1991.<sup>29</sup>

### **The UNTAC Arrives and Departs.**

UN Security Council Resolution 745 (1992), creating the UNTAC, was approved on February 28, 1992. The UNTAC became operational by absorbing the personnel and resources of the UNAMIC. In some respects, the UNTAC's mandate was typical of other UN mandates of the time, and was signed by all parties to the Cambodian conflict before the UNTAC mission began. The conflicting parties agreed to (1) cease the fighting, (2) allow the UNTAC to act as the security guarantor of all parties, and (3) disarm their soldiers and send them into cantonment areas monitored by the UNTAC during the transition period. However, in expansive new initiatives, civilian aspects of the mandate provided that the UNTAC would also assume control of five ministries: economic and finance, defense, interior and the national police, foreign relations, and information (formerly the ministry of propaganda). These civil provisions were to ensure a neutral environment for the election and, in particular, to prevent the SOC from using the state apparatus to

unduly influence the election. As a further part of the mandate, the UNTAC was tasked to ensure the repatriation of refugees and provide humanitarian relief. A Supreme National Council (SNC), which included members from all the conflicting parties, was to act as the repository of Cambodian sovereignty:

... the Supreme National Council of Cambodia (SNC) was “the unique legitimate body and source of authority in which, throughout the transitional period, the sovereignty, independence and unity of Cambodia are enshrined.” SNC, which was made up of the four Cambodian factions, delegated to the United Nations “all powers necessary” to ensure the implementation of the Agreements.<sup>30</sup>

The UNTAC was led by a civilian diplomat, Yasushi Akashi, who acted as the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG). The senior military leader and head of the military component was an Australian, Lieutenant General John Sanderson. Depending on how and when you count, the UNTAC consisted of 15,900 military members, 3,600 civilian police, 2,000 UN civilians, 450 other UN volunteers, and numerous locally hired personnel to serve as staff and interpreters. Over 1.5 billion dollars, mostly in salaries, would be spent.<sup>31</sup> Not surprisingly, where you sit determines how successful you believe the UNTAC was in meeting its goals. It was the largest peacekeeping mission in UN history.

On June 13, 1992, it was decided that 200,000 Cambodian soldiers of the different factions would be disarmed and relocated into 52 cantonment facilities.<sup>32</sup> By September 1992, however, the UNTAC had managed to collect only 50,000 weapons, of which about 42,368 came from the Phnom Penh government of the SOC.<sup>33</sup>

As late as March 1993, only 55,000 troops had entered the cantonments, and the SRSG ordered the disarmament program suspended since it was failing to achieve its purpose. Most of the troops in cantonment came from the SOC and continuation would have disadvantaged them in the negotiations and in the field. The limited success left significant arms and men available to the conflicting parties. For example, the Khmer Rouge, which consisted of only seven or eight percent of the population, nonetheless had an armed strength of 10,000-15,000 and controlled 15 percent of the total area of Cambodia.<sup>34</sup> As a result of UNTAC operations, the other factions controlled a less significant territory and much less efficient armies, but Prince Sihanouk's FUNCINPEC could count on a potentially high level of the population's support because of his popularity.

Most observers, political or academic, consider the mission very successful. Yet, issues remain. The mission never successfully disarmed the Khmer Rouge, and this led to later political violence. Consenting parties felt unfairly treated. The massive introduction of foreign troops had a disastrous effect on the local culture and introduced social issues of prostitution and HIV/AIDS. The Cambodian people also despised many UNTAC workers who widely patronized prostitution in a culturally conservative country.<sup>35</sup>

However, the UNTAC did get something right. One thing that is frequently used by commentators who think the UNTAC mission was a success was the repatriation of refugees.<sup>36</sup> The civil war in Cambodia had displaced hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people. Although the number decreased over time, the UNTAC did bring back many refugees from camps along the Cambodian-Thai border and successfully relocated them. This improved the livelihood

of these people and ended the predatory practices of local warlords who reigned over the refugees camps during the war.

Not surprisingly, another success of the UNTAC was the election, although it marginalized the Khmer Rouge. The Cambodian people had not participated in a true election since the 1970 coup. A significant success that the UNTAC can claim is the development of a democratic and civic culture. The UNTAC maintained a radio station which informed the people about democratic issues and about the electoral process.<sup>37</sup> Even more obscure, and often forgotten by many commentators, is the fact that many important human rights NGOs today trace their origins back to the UNTAC mission in Cambodia. Its success lends credence to the role of NGOs and civil society more generally in the still emerging global order.

Over four million Cambodians participated in the 1993 elections. Of the 120 seats in the legislature, the FUNCINPEC won 58 seats, the CPP 51, the KPNLF 10, and the Moulinaka party won 1 seat. Because the constitution called for a two-thirds' majority for a party to form a government, some scheme of power-sharing had to be made. Elements within the CPP protested the election results and threatened to secede unless their power-sharing demands were met. However, this may have been a political maneuver since most of the CPP, including Prime Minister Hun Sen, did not participate in such actions and instead were predisposed to negotiate in order to end the crisis.<sup>38</sup> The negotiations that ensued, mediated by Prince Sihanouk and Akashi, produced a complex power-sharing system. It created a constitutional monarchy, and the first country to have a dual prime minister system as a result of the compromise between the CPP and the FUNCINPEC.

Prince Sihanouk was proclaimed the king, and Prince Ranariddh (FUNCINPEC) and Hun Sen (CPP) served as first and second prime minister, respectively. The UNTAC's mandate ended in September 1993 with the promulgation of the Constitution for the Kingdom of Cambodia and the formation of the new Government. However, the various military forces tended to remain supportive of the conflicting parties as opposed to the new state.

### **The Aftermath.**

The Khmer Rouge was left outside the final political solution and cut off from external aid. This strategy was called the "Departing Train" strategy: the Khmer Rouge was warned by Akashi that if they did not jump on board, the train would leave without them, and the Khmer Rouge would be isolated. From their stronghold in the northwest, the remnants of the Khmer Rouge continued to act as spoilers in the politics of Cambodia until Pol Pot's death in 1998. However, immediately after the 1993 election, moderate factions began to split from Pol Pot and opened secret negotiations with both sides of the coalition government. In less than a year after the new government was formed, it was divided once again along factional lines, and the Khmer Rouge became more important than ever, seeking advantage by allying themselves with one or the other of the ruling factions.

Beginning in 1996, the CPP received intelligence reports that Khmer Rouge soldiers were secretly being transported from the border area to the capital city, finding shelters in the barracks controlled by officers loyal to the FUNCINPEC. Prince Rannaridh had made clear in speeches on many occasions that he wished to

“redress the balance of power” in the government—to claim the power he believed the UN-sponsored elections had given his party, as opposed to the compromised solution negotiated by Akashi and Prince Sihanouck which favored the CPP because of their entrenched positions from previous governance of SOC. The Prince was also caught illegally importing arms, mainly consisting of anti-tank weapons, apparently in an attempt to gain parity with the CPP which maintained armor supremacy in its loyal forces.

Finally, in 1997, major fighting broke out between a Khmer Rouge/FUNCINPEC coalition and the CPP forces. The event, which lasted for 2 days (July 5-6, 1997), has been wrongly labeled a coup d'état by many journalists since the second Prime Minister, Hun Sen, emerged victorious. However, it was more a struggle caused by the unsettled Khmer Rouge and unresolved issues left by UNTAC. Both sides (the CPP and the FUNCINPEC-Khmer Rouge) had faced off in a series of small skirmishes days or even weeks before the alleged coup. Everyone understood that fighting was inevitable between the two major factions making up the new government. With open fighting, Hun Sen and the CPP forces quickly defeated Prince Ranaridh's FUNCINPEC and their Khmer Rouge allies. The swiftness of that victory prevented Cambodia from plunging into another prolonged civil war. The Prince left Phnom Penh for Paris a few days before the event and remained there until the election in 1998. The CPP won a majority in the 1998 and the subsequent 2003 and 2008 elections, both of the latter were declared free and fair by international observers. At present, the CPP holds a two-thirds' majority, even though the constitution was amended so that a new government could be formed by a 51 percent majority.

After the events of July 1997, Prime Minister Hun Sen and the CPP decided to reintegrate former Khmer Rouge members back into Cambodian society and politics using what he called a “win-win strategy” that guaranteed security for low and mid-rank former Khmer Rouge fighters, guaranteed previous employment, and prohibited the seizure of properties of defectors. However, the Cambodian government agreed to a transnational tribunal to try and hold accountable the former highest-ranking leaders of the Khmer Rouge for the earlier atrocities under Pol Pot. A viable peace was achieved in 1998, after a bloody fight and an averted prolonged civil war—5 years after the UN-TAC left.

Today, in accordance with the 1993 Constitution, Cambodia is a constitutional democracy with a representative parliament, a prime minister who is head of government, and a king who is head of state. The prime minister is appointed by the king on the advice and with the approval of the national assembly. In October 2004, a special nine-member panel selected King Norodom Sihamoni to serve after a surprise abdication by Norodom Sihanouk. Hun Sen, as prime minister, and Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the then National Assembly speaker, both endorsed the selection as members of the panel. Cambodia still suffers from the effects of the long conflict, but with aid provided by its allies and the industry of its own people, a brighter future is sure to continue.

## **ANALYSIS: BETWEEN POLITICS AND PROCEDURES**

The Cambodian case study offers important insights in regard to the theory, doctrine, and practice of peacekeeping. It points a finger at the crux of the

peacekeeping challenge—finding the balance in politics and procedures that gets at underlying causes of conflict and turns an agreed upon lull in fighting among the conflicting parties into a lasting peace. In examining it objectively as one of only a few “successful operations,” new lessons are discerned and perhaps contribute to better ways of conducting these important operations.

### **The Importance of Context.**

UN peacekeeping missions always have external and internal political components. The situation in Cambodia at the time of the UN intervention was complicated and had been so for years. The conflicting parties agreed to a UN peacekeeping mission because they recognized that they could not resolve the political paradox Cambodia found itself in, and no one was happy with the status quo. U.S., Vietnamese, and Chinese interventions had all played a contributing role in Cambodia’s turmoil, but the paradox was purely Cambodian. Negotiations were necessary because no party by itself could successfully govern in Cambodia. The Khmer Rouge possessed sufficient territory and military power to challenge the peace and stability the SOC-controlled government sought, but not enough to overthrow the government. The SOC was governing effectively in the majority of Cambodia, but the presence of the Khmer Rouge still posed a severe threat to peace. Prince Sihanouk, more than anyone else, was symbolic of Cambodian sovereignty and enjoyed a legitimacy bestowed by the population, but lacked both sufficient military power and governing infrastructure. Had any one party had sufficient military power, governing competence, and legitima-

cy, the conflict would have been settled with no UN peacekeeping mission necessary.

As a result of their history, deep mistrust existed between the Khmer Rouge and the SOC on the one hand, and between the Khmer Rouge and the FUNCINPEC (Prince Sihanouk's movement) on the other hand. Given this history, it is difficult to imagine how trust-building measures could dispel such mistrust. After all, many SOC high-ranking officials, including Prime Minister Hun Sen and the then President of the State Council, Heng Samrin, barely escaped the Eastern Zone massacres ordered by Pol Pot. Nor could the Khmer Rouge, with their ideology rooted in anti-Vietnam propaganda, easily ignore the Vietnamese support of the SOC. Prince Sihanouk was imprisoned in his own palace in Phnom Penh between 1975 and 1979. It should be no surprise that he created his own movement and was determined not to be fooled by the Khmer Rouge the second time around. In coming to the peace table, the SOC and the FUNCINPEC (but also the KPLNF) had decided that political settlement was preferable to fighting, while the Khmer Rouge jumped on board, albeit reluctantly, hoping to take part in any sharing of power. Given all this, it was simply inconceivable that the Khmer Rouge would be accepted by the other two main parties.

Other states' interests were also at play. Externally, the mandate and staffing of the UNTAC were a political process that played out within the UN forums, but were guided by the national interests of the participating decisionmaker's states. The intertwined histories of the United States, Vietnam, and China complicated the situation. The United States and China were concerned about Vietnamese influence in any future Cambodian government, and the United Statesulti-

mately adamantly opposed Pol Pot's participation.<sup>39</sup> These external interests are evident in the UN debates, the structure of the mandate, and the makeup of the supporting military forces. Consequently, the appeal of subordinate military leaders back to their respective national authorities and the continued U.S. opposition to any Vietnamese involvement could have been anticipated. Since they were political in nature and foreseeable, it suggests that UN authorities could have addressed them better in advance and enhanced political authority and support for the mission. Once the peacekeeping charter was agreed upon among the conflicting parties and within the UN Security Council, national interests of the participating states in the operation came into play. With the arrival of the UNTAC in Cambodia, it became an integral part of the play of local politics. In this latter regard, the SRSG must synchronize the mandate with local context in order to achieve success. It is local context that largely determines the national players and the choices available to them. For example, the SRSG must consider the roles and objectives of spoilers based on this context instead of theoretical definitions.

It was in this complicated strategic context that the Paris Peace Agreement was reached and the charter written. In hindsight, some of the difficulties and failures of the operation, as identified herein, could have been foreseen with a more careful consideration of the external and internal context. In this regard, a lesson of the Cambodian case study is: Formulation of a peacekeeping mandate must be founded with an in depth comprehension of external and internal political conditions. Of the two, local political conditions more directly affect mission success and the mandate must accommodate all the conflicting parties without

allowing any one party, or internal or external actor, to dictate what constitutes mission success or to constrain the mandate in such a manner that it cannot adapt to changing conditions.

## **The Role of Leadership.**

The UN peacekeeping force was invited into Cambodian to help Cambodians resolve their long-standing internal power struggles. While a return to fighting always loomed as an option, the underlying causes of the conflict were political—how political power was to be shared when differing factions possessed dominant military power, control of the bureaucracy of government, and legitimacy among the population, and when each lacked some degree of legitimacy in the eyes of the international community. The agreement to accept and implement a UN peacekeeping mission and pursue negotiations confirms the primacy of the political component in this UN operation. The immediate issues of governance in Cambodia confronting the peacekeepers also suggest that the peacekeeping mission should be viewed primarily as a political mission rather than a military one. Hence, in peacekeeping, the military is essential, but its purpose is to facilitate a political activity and resolution. The *politics* of peacekeeping is the key to a successful outcome. Consequently, the SRSG is the best-placed international representative who can address the immediate causes of conflict and facilitate resolution of the underlying causes. Cambodia's experience illustrates the issues that stem from the inadequate attention that has been paid to the role of this important actor.

As the Senior Representative of the Secretary General, the SRSG is formally in charge of the entire peace-

keeping mission. However, UN doctrine and policy in regard to the SRSG's roles and authority is ambiguous, and, in light of UN politics, perhaps purposely so. The practical consequences of this lack of clarity is that SRSGs are often not confident about their role and authority, and subordinates often challenge, ignore, or work around the SRSG's directives and guidance. As a result, an SRSG spends an inordinate amount of time trying to gain and maintain control over his various sub-components. Without a clear declaration of, and support for, SRSG authority, most subordinate components at times view the SRSG's authority as *pro forma*. Akashi may not have been the best SRSG ever and made his errors in Cambodia, but he did act as the senior in-country authority and grasped the primacy of a political solution.

Just how you get to a solution is the primary problem to be solved by the SRSG. Akashi expressed the complexity and difficulty of the SRSG leadership task in an article written in 1994:

Based on my 560 days in Cambodia, I can say emphatically that, with the right combination of external (global and regional) and internal forces and the institutional mechanisms to harmonize and focus necessary support for the attainment of common objectives, even the most intractable situation can in due course be resolved. However, there is no magic formula for achieving this other than persistence, determination, flexibility, collective consultation and action, professional dedication and the time-honored common sense on the part of all concerned.<sup>40</sup>

How well did Akashi do? As the SRSG, as argued above, he was responsible for everything the UNTAC did in Cambodia. While much of the following is developed in greater detail elsewhere to illustrate criti-

cal points of analysis, as a summary, his achievements were a mixed bag. The UNTAC enjoyed a number of successes in solving immediate problems such as humanitarian aid and refugee repatriation. It ultimately fostered a democratic culture in Cambodia, although elections were only conducted through the marginalization of the Khmer Rouge, one of the consenting parties to UN intervention. However, on other issues, such as the disarmament of armed factions to ensure a safe political environment before the elections, the UNTAC failed. In addition, the UNTAC introduced new issues. The UNTAC's presence, for all its good, competed unfairly for workers and created a degree of inflation. The UNTAC staff members who patronized prostitution and other questionable businesses conveyed the image of a culturally-corrupted foreign organization. Ironically, this image coincided with the Khmer Rouge propaganda of a biased and corrupt Western intervention. As prostitution and related crimes flourished, the UNTAC's senior leadership seemed unwilling to address the problem. Although most Cambodians resented such moral laxity, luckily for the UNTAC, Cambodian culture has no proclivity for enforcing cultural morals with force. However, the lesson is clear: UN peacekeeping forces should adhere to standards of conduct that reinforce their validity as opposed to detracting from it.

Given the underlying causes of the conflict, Akashi can be credited for contributing to success, even if not directly, especially given the fact that he was willing to place more emphasis on solving the problem than on some abstract notion of impartiality in the face of political realities. As will be explained later, he did not hesitate to marginalize the Khmer Rouge (a signatory of the Paris Peace Accord) in favor of other parties who

seemed to want to move ahead. On the one hand, the resolution to the conflict may have been prolonged by his expediency in this matter. Nonetheless, ultimately the UN intervention and Akashi's leadership resulted in a government that was legitimate, effective, and acceptable to both the Cambodian people and the international community, likely resulting in less loss of life than would have been possible otherwise.<sup>41</sup> On the other hand, as this case study analysis reveals, much more could have been done to facilitate an earlier conflict resolution.

The case study also reveals the importance of the quality and roles of the leadership within the conflicting parties. Pol Pot as a leader was not equal to the task of providing good governance to Cambodia when in power (a gross understatement of his genocidal regime, but nonetheless true), nor able to find an effective role in power sharing. All of the other leaders were able to participate in negotiations and reconcile their political differences. In the end, they rose to the national challenge and found political solutions for effective governance.

In regard to peacekeeping operations leadership, the Cambodian case study reinforces the doctrinal precept that peacekeeping seeks a political solution. As the on ground political representative of the UN, the SRSG is the senior official with directive authority over all mission organizations and personnel. The SRSG must be empowered to construe the articles of the UN mandate with the evolving local context as long as it is within the parameters of the mandate's purpose and meaning.

## **A Spoiler Perspective.**

The UNTAC's policy for containing spoilers is probably the policy that is most under researched, misunderstood, and controversial. Yet the UNTAC owed much of its success to how it addressed spoiler issues. There were many spoilers in the Cambodian peace process; in fact, depending on the preciseness of your definition, virtually all of the conflict parties were spoilers at some point. If we accept Stedman's core definition, namely that the spoiler is an actor whose goal is to undermine the peace process, then all three main parties (the Khmer Rouge, the FUNCINPEC, and the SOC) can be classified as such, depending on the period one is talking about. In contrast to the conventional perspective, this case study suggests that peacekeepers might better operate from the perspective that spoilers are a matter of degree, and their goals change over time. From this perspective, the FUNCINPEC's and the SOC's actions seemed more like political maneuvers than actions designed to undermine the peace process. The Khmer Rouge, on the other hand, pursued a spoiler role when it became clear no one truly wanted to get involved with the former genocidal regime.

## **The Khmer Rouge.**

The Khmer Rouge was ideally suited to play the role of a spoiler. It was the main fighting force in the insurgency against the SOC. Ideologically motivated, the Khmer Rouge fought to drive out Vietnamese influence. In contrast, many of the other guerilla forces succumbed to personal greed, and their activities became more about lucrative smuggling operations than

fighting. Nonetheless, however strong they were, the Khmer Rouge had no basis whatsoever to claim political legitimacy in a final settlement of the conflict due to their past atrocities. However, as part of Prince Sihanouk's umbrella movement they garnered some international recognition and support for their operations because of the Prince's legitimacy and the U.S. refusal to recognize the SOC.

Stedman classifies the Khmer Rouge as a spoiler with total goals, meaning that they cannot be incorporated into the peace process, and must, consequently, be marginalized. However, the evidence better suggests that the Khmer Rouge was initially more than ambivalent about the political process, and it is more probable that they did seek a chance to get involved in the elections. One has to bear in mind that the Khmer Rouge was a signatory of the Paris Peace Agreement (albeit, with Chinese support), while a total spoiler would more likely have just stayed out.

More significant of the intention of the Khmer Rouge to get involved in the political process were the attempts of their representatives, Khieu Samphan and Son Sen, to integrate the Khmer Rouge official office in Phnom Pen. However, on November 27, 1991, the two men were attacked in their villa by hundreds, or even thousands, of people seeking retribution for the genocide committed under the Khmer Rouge regime. The mob cornered and briefly assaulted them in a room before the police (from the SOC) intervened and evacuated them to safety in an armored car. Many critical commentators suspect the SOC was behind the event, although it could not have been hard to find a genuinely angry mob to attack representatives of a regime that had committed unbelievable atrocities for over 3 years. At the time, neither Prince Sihanouk nor Akashi issued any condemnation, or even heavy criti-

cism, of the event. Given their past relationship with the Khmer Rouge, Prince Sihanouk and the SOC both had reasons to see the Khmer Rouge intimidated out of participating in the election. Akashi's response was another matter.<sup>42</sup>

Moreover, before the attack, Pol Pot, the real leader of the Khmer Rouge, designed a plan called *1000 Villages*, providing for the Khmer Rouge to consolidate control over a sizable portion of the population in order to gain leverage in the post-election power sharing.<sup>43</sup> Such evidence strongly indicates an intention to participate in the election process. However, anyone in the Khmer Rouge would have interpreted the attack as a strong message from the other parties directed at excluding the Khmer Rouge from the elections. Reports also abound, especially from the U.S. Department of State, that some foreign governments (including the U.S. Government) explicitly opposed including the Khmer Rouge in the election process without some form of trial for the atrocities.<sup>44</sup> The Khmer Rouge apparently calculated that participating in the election would be impractical or unfruitful and concluded it would be better to wait until one of the other two main parties needed their support. In the complex local politics of Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge was soon proven right.

For its part, the UNTAC did little to bring the Khmer Rouge on board, although, in terms of fairness to all signatories, it (the UNTAC) might have chosen to do so. Impartiality, it seems, can be violated by what you choose not to do, as well as what you choose to do. The insight here is instructive: the Khmer Rouge was not a total spoiler, as Stedman concludes, and was no longer united by Pol Pot's ideology. Many in the Khmer Rouge apparently had long since relinquished their ideology, and in the peace process were ask-

ing for some share of power in the new government, understandable given their military power. A better paradigm for understanding the Khmer Rouge might have been as a greedy or even limited-goals spoiler. However, this was not how it was viewed. Whether the past history, some kind of underlying path-dependency, the immediate political context, or poor judgment are the culprits, the UNTAC, the international community, and the other parties to the conflict found it impossible to include the Khmer Rouge.<sup>45</sup> Stedman's framework, while useful for understanding the spoiler phenomena, fails to develop the full context and potential in regard to Khmer Rouge at this critical time and in over-stereotyping any party to the conflict, decisionmakers can severely constrain the potential options available for dealing with spoilers. Shortly thereafter, the Khmer Rouge was overtaken by the flow of events and became a spoiler that behaved as one with total goals.<sup>46</sup>

In Cambodia, the marginalization policy pursued by Akashi created a problem because it paradoxically made the Khmer Rouge more important: Their military could significantly endanger the balance of power of the new coalition government by simply allying with any faction. Instead of resolving the problem, the Departing Train policy simply defers it to a later date when peacekeepers are no longer there to keep the peace.<sup>47</sup>

### **Prince Sihanouk and the SOC.**

An examination of these actors raises further questions in the conceptual construct for understanding spoilers because their actions contradict simplified classification. Classifications matter because such definitions often determine the policies that will be

pursued by the presumably unbiased peacekeepers. *Spoiler behavior and practical political maneuver are distinct, even though political maneuver is inherent to spoiler behavior. Motivation matters in assessing behavior and political maneuver must be treated differently from spoiling behavior by the peacekeeper or opportunities will be missed and unnecessary complications created.* In the case of these two actors, the maneuvers were not aimed at undermining the peace process; in fact, their goals would be served if, and only if, the peace process continued.<sup>48</sup> Yet, to ensure influence in the political process, their demands needed to be accompanied by a credible threat that would potentially undermine the peace process. In essence, something that would put them in the spoiler category if the conventional definitions were applied.

Prince Sihanouk often announced that he would vacate his seat in the SNC for health reasons, only to come back and say that he would hold on to his seat.<sup>49</sup> This political maneuver inevitably happened whenever there was a seemingly irreconcilable disagreement with another party, especially with the Khmer Rouge, or foreign governments. Legitimacy was what the Prince brought to the SNC, and without the Prince's presence the political process would grind to a halt. Yes, he could act as a spoiler if he chose, but, in fact, his maneuvers facilitated progress. The Prince had neither the intention of, nor was the FUNCINPEC's interests served in, undermining the peace process, as was made clear during the post-election crisis of 1993. At this time, the Prince failed in an attempt to declare himself the head of state, seeking to claim power in order to surmount the disagreements between the FUNCINPEC and the CPP. The Prince's own party, the FUNCINPEC (then under the new leadership of

the Prince's son, Prince Norodom Rannaridh), the CPP (the party representing the SOC), and the U.S. embassy opposed such a scheme.<sup>50</sup> Yet, Prince Sihanouk remained in the political process. This was clear evidence that it was a political maneuver.

The case of the SOC is equally instructive. Prime Minister Hun Sen was in large part the instrumental figure in initiating a negotiated settlement. Up until the elections, the SOC as a whole was quite respectful and supportive of the peace process. However, the election results were a political upset for the CPP. Out of a total of 120 sets, the FUNCINPEC won 58 seats and the CPP won 51, while the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP) picked up 10 seats and the Molinaka secured the last seat. Since the constitution stated that a two-thirds majority was needed for a government to be formed, it was obvious that the CPP and the FUNCINPEC would have to form a coalition government. Stunned, some elements within the SOC threatened to secede if a recount was not made.<sup>51</sup> Yet, given the closeness of the split, any recount would be unlikely to produce a majority for either party. Complicating this situation further, the SOC controlled significant military forces and the governmental bureaucracy at this time and their participation was essential to a successful resolution.

The crisis was averted by a timely and clever intervention by the UN SRSG. But did the SOC seek a spoiler role? Through spoiler lenses, the SOC behavior could be classified as that of a total spoiler. However, the SOC had nothing to gain from a recount since any recount would not be likely to give them the required two-thirds majority. It is unreasonable to think they would have wanted the peace process to fall apart simply to gamble for a very minimal gain since the elections conferred the long sought legitimacy they craved.

In the worst case scenario, the CPP still maintained a sizable share of power in a newly formed coalition government, with influence over a significant part of the military and bureaucratic structure. Fortunately, Akashi, as the SRSG, perceived SOC behaviors in light of this logic and more consistent with political maneuvers than spoiler actions.

### **The Limits of Intervention.**

Are there limits to the level of intervention in peacekeeping operations or is Richard Betts correct in asserting that peacekeeping only works when the intervention is unlimited or, if it is to be limited, so tilted toward one favored party that peace is restored by assuring a clear winner?<sup>52</sup> Betts argues that in Cambodia the UNTAC succeeded because it carried out a total intervention, referring to the revolutionary expansion of the mandate to include governing functions. However broad the mandate, the reality on the ground was that the intervention was very much limited and it is unlikely that unlimited intervention was practical for anyone, even the UN.

While illuminating in the study of interventions, his assessment of the mission shares a common error of previous examinations which is the perception that the UNTAC ran Cambodia during the transition period. Quite the contrary, the UNTAC never governed Cambodia. Had they done that, the mission would have likely been a failure.

Success for the mission has been founded on the facts that an election was conducted with only minor actual violence, and a new government was formed as a result. While these are not small accomplishments in Cambodian history, or even the history of peace-

keeping, they are not evidence of a successful unlimited intervention. The Cambodian case is much more complex, and the lessons for peacekeeping more complicated. Of the requirements posed in the mandate, perhaps the most successful was the repatriation and relocation of all of the refugees from camps along the Cambodian-Thai border. Apart from this significant success, the UNTAC achievements were not as bright as they are often portrayed.

The military aspects of the mandate failed in their key component. The demobilization and cantonment system provision proved too difficult to implement. The Khmer Rouge refused to follow the Paris agreement and, as peacekeeper, the UNTAC had no enforcement mandate: The Khmer Rouge decision to deny inspection of demobilization was neither forced nor punished.<sup>53</sup> This led other factions to ultimately keep their military forces to safeguard against a surprise attack by the Khmer Rouge. The UNTAC's military component was neutral at best, and the military aspects of intervention were not total in any sense. For example, the ROE in regard to the Khmer Rouge forces was one of withdrawal in case of doubt. After the attack on Khieu Samphan and Son Sen in 1991, the UNTAC decided to withdraw some of its troops from areas close to the Khmer Rouge northern stronghold in anticipation of retaliation from the Khmer Rouge. Stories are told where the appearance of a solitary Khmer Rouge soldier forced an entire UNTAC military contingent to abandon its verification of cantonment sites.<sup>54</sup>

As peacekeepers, UNTAC military forces were observers and monitors. They were prepared to assist the parties to the conflict in keeping their agreement and for self-defense, but this was hardly unlimited in-

tervention. Without an enforcement mandate, cantonment and demobilization could not be forced. Once a spoiler emerged, a security dilemma was created for all other parties who had no choice but to refuse to demobilize. Their fear of the risk is well-founded: What would happen if the spoiler only attacks the other parties to the conflict and remains neutral in regard to the peacekeepers? Whether or not the peacekeepers would respond to attacks on indigenous parties is not clear in UN official doctrine. Thus, the nonspoiler parties have good reason to be cautious.

Can a peacekeeping mission use offensive military action to punish a spoiler and force compliance? This is a difficult question. In a peacekeeping mission, an offensive posture has significant external and internal risks. Contributing countries deploy the troops with the consent, implicit or explicit, of their own populations with an understanding that the troops are not intended for heavy combat. An offensive posture creates a different context with increased probabilities for greater sacrifices than the public of a contributing country might be willing to accept. In Somalia, when the Rangers got into a bitter firefight in 1993 following the introduction of a more aggressive UN policy, the U.S. Government decided to withdraw forces because the U.S. public was not willing to sacrifice American lives for the interests involved.

Contrary to Betts' assessment, in Cambodia Akashi and his senior military subordinate, General Sanderson, were well aware of the local context and the level of international support and agreed that offensive actions against the Khmer Rouge were not specified by the mandate and not appropriate for the mission. General Loridon of France, second-in-command to General Sanderson, was a strong, vocal advocate of

an offensive posture. He was subsequently dismissed. Akashi was criticized by some as being too neutral, not willing to use tougher action to enforce the mandate. However, in retrospect, his decision was correct. The SOC, with mechanized forces and air support, had great difficulty for years subduing the Khmer Rouge.<sup>55</sup> It is hard to believe that the UNTAC could have done it without incurring numerous casualties and a loss of international support.

The Cambodian case better proves that a defensive posture, as opposed to an offensive one, is more advantageous for peacekeepers in pursuit of their goals. Good defensive postures offer the possibilities that spoilers will be deterred and will continue to actively participate in, or return to, negotiations; both of which support UN goals. The case of the UNTAC's military component in Cambodia showed that unlimited intervention was both unnecessary to success and quite difficult.

The SRSG is best placed to assess local conditions and consult with higher UN authority in regard to proper posture, as well as to communicate a credible military posture to the conflicting parties and local population. Success in peacekeeping does not depend on an offensive military posture, but rather it relies on political solutions brokered by the SRSG.

In regard to the civilian provisions in the mandate, even with its remarkable scope, the UNTAC's control over the Cambodian state apparatus was far from total. The SOC's entrenched and strong territorial administration encompassed the provincial, municipal, and village levels over the greater part of Cambodia. This governing system was designed as a counterinsurgency practice against the Khmer Rouge. Thus, even if we assume that the UN could maintain con-

trol over the five ministries with a few international civil servants and some provincial governors, the local administration remained largely under the SOC's control. In the existing Cambodian administrative system, the local police forces remained under the direct control of the local SOC administrator. When elements of the SOC threatened to secede, the existence of these armed forces made the threat immediately credible. Notwithstanding the great value of the UN effort in civilian sectors, the intervention was very much limited and depended on the cooperation of the parties to the conflict.

The Cambodia case more clearly reveals just how difficult peacekeeping missions are. Even unlimited mandates are problematic; total control is all but impossible. The UNTAC would not have had the capabilities to take total control anyway: Total control requires not only a lot of people but also people with the skills and knowledge required for the local conditions. There was no way the UN could have achieved this in a practical sense or a political one at that time. Nor is it likely that peacekeeping missions today can do this. As a result, in most, if not all, cases, peacekeeping depends on the participation of local actors. The question is not whether to take total control, but to what extent to attempt to control, and how? The UNTAC was clearly not in total control. Any success, therefore, was the result of factors other than unlimited intervention.

When the outsider intervenes too directly by running both the administrative and military component of the target state, local actors who hold power in any existing structure will have a stake in resisting. One also has to remember that the interveners cannot stay in country forever; they have to transfer power and leave at some point. Unlimited intervention still requires an

ultimate transition of power and its most likely real distinction in the long run is the greater length and costs in blood, international legitimacy, and treasure of the intervening parties. In the Cambodian case, the SRSG negotiated with little reliance on military threat even though the UNTAC force was significant should he want to use it. Strategically, one must ask if an unlimited intervention is justified if there is any probability the same result can be achieved through effective peacekeeping at lower use of force levels. A total intervention and conditions of peace enforcement are theoretically possible, but politically and practically unworkable. Neither external politics and support nor internal political and social conditions are conducive to these courses of action except under the most grievous conditions. Cambodia was not one of those cases.

### **The Role of Impartiality.**

How should one make sense of a peacekeeping mission? What should be the overarching concepts that guide the SRSG's actions? Elsewhere this monograph has suggested that two keys to success are: to focus on a political solution, and to seek to address the fundamental or underlying causes of the conflict. The official documents of the UN stress impartiality as another primary guiding principle, leading to the idea that fairness is one of the central issues. If this is the case, the SRSG is something more of a judge than a political representative of the UN, and a mission leader responsible for success. Akashi is strangely silent on the role of impartiality in peacekeeping operations.<sup>56</sup> Nonetheless, his actions in Cambodia speak for themselves and the results again provide insights worthy of consideration.

Clearly the participation of the Khmer Rouge in the formation of a new government was not welcome. The mob attacks, whether staged or spontaneous, set the stage for the Khmer Rouge boycott of the general election. All the local actors, even the former allies of the Khmer Rouge, chose to abandon them. Foreign governments also opposed the idea of Pol Pot and his adherents participating in the election. The U.S. Government, in particular, could not reconcile a Khmer Rouge role in a new government, considering their past atrocities, and directly opposed Pol Pot's inclusion.<sup>57</sup> Both the local and international contexts complicated the application of the concept of impartiality for the peacekeepers.

As one of the conflicting parties and a signatory to the Paris agreements, and under the abstract notion of fairness, the Khmer Rouge was entitled to impartial treatment from the SRSG and other peacekeepers. According to the principle of impartiality, Akashi had no basis for ignoring the factors that led to the boycott or proceeding toward a solution without the Khmer Rouge. Certainly the Khmer Rouge's own actions in resisting disarmament and choosing to boycott elections marked them as spoilers and made Akashi's decisions easier, but the fundamental dilemma he confronted was not changed. Should he adhere to impartiality by insisting on actual or pending Khmer Rouge participation regardless of changing local politics and international opposition, thereby decreasing the chance of reaching a near-term comprehensive agreement? Or should he accept that conditions had changed, waive impartially, and pursue an agreement among the other parties with the risk that the Khmer Rouge issue (which was an underlying cause of the conflict) could be otherwise resolved by the new government? As SRSG, he chose the latter.

Akashi ultimately got his agreement with some further deviance from impartiality, but his choice in regard to the Khmer Rouge contributed significantly to the renewed, but short, conflict in 1997. The Khmer Rouge's military capacity needed to be addressed for any long-term resolution of the conflict to be viable. In giving the Khmer Rouge the Departing Train ultimatum, he placed them in an impossible position where, in order to participate, they would have to subordinate their claim to legitimacy and embrace an unacceptable risk of being frozen out of power sharing by voter rejection. Under these conditions, neither a sincere conflicting party nor a spoiler could afford to get on Akashi's train.

If Akashi's calculations accepted the risk of a Khmer Rouge reemergence in the belief a new government could deal with it, it is one thing. If his motivation was to just get an election and get out, it is another. Nor should any analysis minimize the risk involved because in hindsight the reemergence of the conflict could be passed off as a coup, thereby relieving the UNTAC of any responsibility. Chance could have swung another way, and Cambodia could have entered another decade of conflict. The Departing Train is an inadequate policy for dealing with spoilers. It neither integrates the spoiler into the political resolution process nor accounts for the spoiler's means of power; consequently, it leaves the spoiler in a position to disrupt any success. The best such a policy can achieve is to provide some length of time for conditions to change, the UN mission to declare success and leave, or the other parties to build sufficient power to counter any spoiler's actions. This was not the case in Cambodia.

The failure of the UN supervised elections in 1993 to produce a clear two-thirds' majority to form a government, and the surprising 58 seats gained by the FUNCINPEC also challenged the principle of impartiality. SOC expectations, based on their greater influence in the government's bureaucratic structure, were gravely disappointed. Some threatened to challenge the election or withdraw from the process. Impartiality would suggest that the UN advocate adherence to the results or allow the Cambodians to work it out. However, Akashi was a very important player in redefining what the government would be so that power was shared more equally in favor of the SOC. Unlike his inaction when the Khmer Rouge slowly drifted away from the peace process, Akashi worked actively with Prince Sihanouk and the SOC Prime Minister Hun Sen to broker a power-sharing deal between the FUNCINPEC, now led by Prince Sihanouk's son, Prince Ranariddh, and the SOC. The resulting dual ministry is based on a consensus principle wherein both prime ministers have to agree before a policy can be adopted, thus effectively giving each veto power. The Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of National Defense were also governed by co-ministers in consensus. Compared with the Khmer Rouge, who Akashi did not make any effort toward accommodating, the SOC got what they wished—an equal share of power. However, unlike the ultimatum of the Departing Train offered to the Khmer Rouge, the consensus government approach attempted to resolve the underlying causes of conflict, and it was a success.

In this case, Akashi is on record for how he viewed the principle of impartiality when it confronts the realities of the local political context as he later defended his action:

One can question the legitimacy and stability of this formula, which treated the two major parties on an approximately equal basis. While this is unorthodox by universal democratic principles, we have to admit the practical wisdom of combining the “new wind”, represented by the victorious FUNCINPEC, consisting mostly of upper and upper middle class intellectuals aspiring to the restoration of the monarchy, with the experience and power of [the] CPP, which is authoritarian but has 14 years of administrative experience, with much of the army and the police under its control.<sup>58</sup>

Impartiality would ideally call for equal treatment of all parties. However, in the study of the Cambodian case, we find the SRSG’s departure from pure impartiality preserved, first, the conduct of the election, and second, the formulation of an acceptable form of power-sharing when the election results were challenged. One can question Akashi’s judgment in regard to effects on underlying causes, risks he accepted, and even his motivations to some degree, but he essentially got the application of the impartiality principle correct. Impartiality is the ideal principle to guide the SRSG and peacekeeping effort. It builds trust and guides a sincere effort for a just and workable solution. Sometimes, as the conflicting parties or spoilers seek to find advantage in the concept, the SRSG should protect his impartiality and avoid any chance of the appearance of bias. However, peacekeeping is part of a political process that consists of both a historical and an evolving future context. Local political context always influences and constricts the options available to the SRSG to achieve mission success. Because three important actors (the SOC, the FUNCINPEC, and the United States) did not want to see the Khmer Rouge included

in the political process, Akashi had to play the role of politician as opposed to lawyer in regard to the Paris Peace Agreement and the charter. The political resolution of the conflict invariably takes priority over the sustainment of some pure idea of impartiality.

That is the dilemma: The SRSG can neither forget the importance of the principle of impartiality nor ignore the realities of the political context. How impartiality is applied in any particular situation will always be a matter of political judgment and leadership. Ultimately, it was not the position or goals of spoilers, military capability, or the adherence to impartiality that mattered most; ultimately the politics were the key. In the case of Cambodia, when the SRSG supported a coalition representing the majority of the Cambodian people (the SOC and the FUNCINPEC), the resumption of conflict became less likely, and the underlying causes avoided. Choosing sides is a bias, but if it has to be done, the SRSG should err on the side of parties or coalitions that constitute the largest segment of the country.<sup>59</sup> Impartiality is necessarily in the eyes of the beholder: The UN Charter is founded in common interests but as issues emerge and conditions change over time the interests and methods of the various indigenous forces and the UN mission will diverge. As this occurs, impartiality remains important as a guiding principle, but the indigenous actors' actions may require UN mission decisions that advantage one actor over another.

### **Length of Mandate.**

The UNTAC mission was completed in 18 months. Success was declared with the completion of the election and the adoption of a coalition government that

was supposed to resolve a 20-year civil war. However, could the UNTAC have accomplished more with a little more time on the ground? Should the Khmer Rouge have been included in the power sharing in some manner? Could the July 5-6, 1997, troubles have been avoided? Obviously, such is speculation and the role of the Khmer Rouge is complicated and controversial, but again the Cambodian case study provides insights into the complexity of peacekeeping.

Scholars studying peacekeeping operations and conflict note that in any conflict, there are two primary types of causes: immediate and underlying causes.<sup>60</sup> Although the UN mandates and doctrine call for the resolution of the underlying causes of conflict, most peacekeeping missions address only the immediate causes; operations that are successful in resolving underlying causes of conflict are rare. The brief return of fighting in 1997 suggests that the underlying causes of conflict in Cambodia had not been fully resolved. The UNTAC's successes and failures also provide insights into the politics, leadership, and policy necessary for more effective peace operations.

With their credible military capabilities, the Khmer Rouge remained the elephant in the room following the UNTAC's departure. Denied a role in the new government and cut off from external support, with declining revenues from their traditional sources in logging and the diamond trade,<sup>61</sup> the members of the Khmer Rouge became increasingly desperate to find a way to participate in the government. The opportunity presented itself in the continual division along factional lines between the CPP and the FUNCINPEC. The division was intensified by the very real possibility that a Khmer Rouge allegiance with either party could significantly alter the existing balance of power.

The Khmer Rouge ultimately chose to support the FUNCINPEC, most likely because they still did not trust the CPP and believed they could dominate the FUNCINPEC once victory was achieved. The Khmer Rouge's reentry on the side of the FUNCINPEC upset the fragile peace and resulted in the failed events of July 5-6, only 4 years after the election. Thomas Hammaberg, the UN's Special Representative on Human Rights in Cambodia at the time, like most observers, reported it was a coup, making this claim especially clear in his 1997 report.<sup>62</sup> Yet, the U.S. Embassy was quite ambivalent about what was happening and did not use the term coup in any of its reports.<sup>63</sup> The embassy seemed to grasp that the events were in a gray zone, and perhaps more than a coup. Then too, acknowledging it as a coup could cut off much needed humanitarian aid for Cambodia, and this was not desired by the U.S. Government. However, the United States did cut its military assistance to ensure a swift return to democratic governance. In retrospect, the U.S. Embassy's report probably got it right. The events were more akin to a continuation of the earlier conflict than something new.

At the time, there was no secret that fighting was almost inevitable among the conflicting partners constituting the coalition government. Prince Rannaridh had made it clear that he was ready to continue the fight. It was evident that a coalition government had not resolved the underlying issues. Why the quickness and emphasis within the UN and on the part of its supporters on describing the reemergence of conflict as a coup? The answer is intergovernmental organizational politics. The UN found it advantageous to call it a coup. In the case of a coup against the legitimately negotiated government, the event was not due to any

UNTAC failure but a spontaneous and independent action of local actors.

The UN should be prepared to help a new local government integrate moderate elements of spoilers back into society and government while providing reassurances that the newly integrated members will not be allowed to destroy any existing balance of power. In Cambodia, eventually, the Hun Sen government integrated the former Khmer Rouge moderate elements using the so-called win-win strategy. According to this formula, only the top leadership of the Khmer Rouge was to be tried. The physical security of the mid-level cadres and soldiers was guaranteed, confiscation of their property precluded, and supportive reemployment policies implemented. Today, many former Khmer Rouge cadres hold public office in the areas formerly under their control; some were elected and others appointed. All denounced the atrocities committed during the Khmer Rouge regime.

In reality, the 1997 fighting was the last act in Cambodia's long civil war. In deciding to ignore the Khmer Rouge and leaving too soon, the UN mission set the conditions for this renewal of conflict. The proximate cause was the opportunity presented by the Khmer Rouge's negotiations, but the real failure was that the UN mission did not achieve or remain long enough to allow for conflict resolution to occur. It is counterhistorical to imagine what could have happened otherwise, but a continued presence during the post-election period could have created the willingness and trust within the newly-formed government necessary to deal more effectively with the Khmer Rouge. Unfortunately, the mandate was too focused on the election as the presumed solution to the conflict. The events in 1997 demonstrate that even marginalized spoilers can

still be a threat to the peace process even after elections. Elections can empower factions, but do not necessarily depower them. Unless spoilers are effectively dealt with, peace remains fragile. Instead of focusing on procedures, such as elections, the UN should establish the length of its mandates based on conflict resolution. Such a policy will be facilitated if the mission adopts a defensive military posture (which entails lower casualties, thus having more staying power), and if the SRSG relies on political progress rather than procedural steps.

Ironically, what intervened to save the UNTAC legacy of success was the swiftness of the 1997 fighting and the CPP's quick victory, not any decisive effect from policies implemented by the UNTAC 4 years earlier. Quite to the contrary, the UNTAC could claim credit for solving the problem only if it had stayed longer and helped find a solution to the Khmer Rouge. As it was, much of the FUNCINPEC apparatus still remained and had to be accommodated, and normal elections were conducted as scheduled in 1998. This and the initiatives to reintegrate Khmer Rouge members back into Cambodian society and its hierarchy of power combined to create a resolution that was acceptable to all.

In the final analysis, the UNTAC was successful in solving many immediate problems, but failed to create the conditions for resolving the underlying causes of the conflict. Although it perhaps made the necessary move in marginalizing the Khmer Rouge, the UNTAC failed to finish what it started. Politically marginalized for the time being, the Khmer Rouge's potential military capabilities were both a spoiler threat to any final resolution among other parties and an alluring option for any disgruntled faction in the new coali-

tion government. Hence, the Cambodian case suggests UN mandates should be extended until the underlying problems are resolved. Although one might think that local problems should be left to local actors to solve, one must bear in mind that, more often than not, fighting will precede any local resolution; however, a wrong political settlement can also lead to fighting. Prime Minister Hun Sen seems to have grasped the risk of the unresolved issues after the election by warning that, "If there was a fighting after the election, it would be disastrous because it happened after a political settlement."<sup>64</sup> Renewed fighting risks all previous gains.

In the future, the UN mandates need to confront whether to fully invest the time and resources for conflict resolution to continue or to pursue more limited goals with a high potential for a relapse into conflict. The prospects for such a comprehensive approach are not hopeful. Given the UN's aversion to the prolongation of big and expensive missions, the dilemma posed between a long-term investment in the resolution of underlying causes or a quick exit under conditions of possible peace will continue to haunt UN peacekeeping.

## CONCLUSION

Almost 200 years ago, Clausewitz famously wrote that "war is nothing but the continuation of policy with other means."<sup>65</sup> Many have tried to refute him, but either failed or misread and misrepresented him. Nevertheless, one might not expect his logic of war to apply in a peacekeeping situation that is not war, per se. Yet his insights in regard to politics and war remain undeniable. While the significant military component involved in the Cambodian peacekeep-

ing mission did not fight a war in a classic sense, they were there to support **the political purpose** of the UN in their representation of the interests of the international community. Certainly, the Cambodian belligerents agreed to negotiations and a UN peacekeeping force, and acted during this period in pursuit of their various factions' political interests. The mixture of the political and military evident in the Cambodian case study suggests a paraphrasing of Clausewitz: Peacekeeping is a continuation of policy by other means. It offers lessons and insights that should be considered in future peacekeeping missions.

In the Cambodian case, internal politics, the formulation of the mandate, the choice of mission leaders and force providers, and the interests of other state actors—the United States, China, ASEAN, and Vietnam—shaped the mission objectives, the ways they could be pursued, the resources available, and, to a degree, many of the challenges that emerged. Yet, as important as these factors were in forming and conducting the UN mission, the Cambodian case study reveals that the internal political context is likely to prove to be more critical on the path to peace. It suggests that understanding local political circumstances, as they exist and evolve, is the real key to successful peacekeeping operations, and should be used to determine the mandate, leadership authority, length of the mission, spoiler management policy, and other decisions in regard to policy and operations.

If peacekeeping is a continuation of politics by other means, and local political context the determinant feature, the SRSG, as the political representative of the international effort, must clearly be in charge. Failure or success of the mission depends on how the SRSG deals with the local actors and the way in which the mission is conducted. All efforts must be subordinate

to his authority. His selection, talent, and empowerment are critical. He must have credibility with the international community, the internal actors, and the mission personnel.

In past research, scholars have largely addressed subjects such as mandates, spoiler management policy, and UN mission organization as separate constructs without sufficient emphasis on local political factors. Such abstractions are valid since analysis of the component parts of peacekeeping helps us conceptually understand each better. However, as this case study illustrates, potentially lost in such abstractions is the role local political conditions play in defining how these components are shaped and interact. In Cambodia, local conditions and interaction defined the opportunities and limitations in regard to the UNTAC's options at the time. Today, the lessons learned from the primacy of local politics in this case study challenge the basic precepts of current UN peacekeeping doctrine and the theoretical constructs that support it. For example, local political conditions made it impractical for the SRSG to be impartial if he was to accomplish the mission. Hence, the Cambodian experience questions the principle of impartiality and what it means.

Other scholars recognize the complexity and difficulty of fully integrating local political conditions into peacekeeping operations, but largely sidestep their primacy by arguing that tougher action can surmount these issues. The strategic logic at work in this argument is that if the intervener can somehow reset the local political conditions, then one can simply install a Western-type democracy, and everything will work itself out in a peaceful democratic process. In reality, such an appealing strategic wish is neither feasible nor likely.

First, finding consensus among the permanent members of the UN Security Council to support a total intervention is difficult, if not impossible. Second, as the case of Cambodia shows, the UN intervener simply lacks the cultural or practical know-how and sufficient personnel to staff and operate all the required functions of a troubled nation-state. Third, few, if any, rational local actors could afford to relinquish all their means of power in an insecure environment to achieve a foreign notion of democratic power sharing. The last thing UN peacekeepers should want is to try to reset local political conditions and find themselves fighting an insurgency. Representative governance is an appropriate goal, but recent history suggests that without a custom of, and institutional basis for, democratic power sharing, a civil war or violent resolution is a more likely outcome. Accommodation to local politics and the consent of sufficient local actors is necessary. Consent cannot be imposed. The UN mission's purpose is not to impose Western democracy, but to facilitate the local actors' peaceful resolution of the conflict and facilitate acceptance of a democratic form of power-sharing.

In its revelation of the complex and interactive nature and centrality of local political conditions, the Cambodian case study suggests a number of important premises for peacekeeping doctrine to consider. However, it is important to remember that peacekeeping theory and doctrine are simply useful intellectual paradigms for understanding and dealing with the complexity of political relationships among people. In this regard, no theoretical or doctrinal construct should ignore the emerging realities on the ground and must adapt to the new circumstances.

- Formulation of a peacekeeping mandate must be founded on an in-depth comprehension of external and internal political conditions. Of the two, local political conditions more directly affect mission success, and the mandate must accommodate all the conflicting parties without allowing any one party, or internal or external actor, to dictate what constitutes mission success or to constrain the mandate in such a manner that it cannot adapt to changing conditions.
- The Length of the mandate should take into account the underlying causes of the conflict. The mission necessarily addresses the immediate causes of conflict, but its focus, tenure, and success are determined by the root causes of conflict.
- Peacekeeping seeks a political solution. As the on-the-ground political representative of the UN, the SRSG must be the senior official with directive authority over all mission organizations and personnel, especially the military component.
- The SRSG must be empowered to interpret the articles of the UN mandate with the evolving local context as long as it is within the parameters of the mandate's purpose and meaning.
- Spoiler behavior and practical political maneuver are distinct, even though political maneuver is inherent to spoiler behavior. Motivation matters in assessing behavior, and political maneuver must be treated differently from spoiling by the peacekeeper or opportunities will be missed and unnecessary complications created.

- Impartiality is necessarily in the eyes of the beholder: The UN charter is founded in common interests but as issues emerge and conditions change over time, the interests and methods of the various indigenous forces and the UN mission will diverge. As this occurs, impartiality remains important as a guiding principle, but the indigenous actors' actions may require UN mission decisions that advantage one actor over another.
- A total intervention and conditions of peace enforcement are theoretically possible, but politically and practically unworkable. Neither external politics and support nor internal political and social conditions are conducive of these courses of action except under the most grievous conditions.
- The Departing Train is an inadequate policy for dealing with spoilers. It neither integrates the spoiler into the political resolution process nor accounts for the spoiler's means of power; consequently it leaves the spoiler in a position to disrupt any success. The best such a policy can achieve is to provide some length of time for conditions to change, the UN mission to declare success and leave, or the other parties to build sufficient power to counter any spoiler's actions.

## ENDNOTES

1. "Charter of the United Nations," *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines*, New York: United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 2006, pp. 13-14, available from [www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml).

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-21.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

5. A security dilemma is a situation where there is no overarching authority to guarantee security and parties must fend for themselves. The safest way to guarantee security in this scenario is to increase or at least preserve one's own armed forces (i.e., refusing to disarm). However, by doing so, any opponent will see the action as hostile and will do the same which will decrease the first party's security in relative terms. As the first state or party acts or does not act, the next will react, so does the third, and so on. If one gives up its capability it is at the mercy of the other, yet if no one takes the risk peace does not come. This can become a downward spiral leading the parties away from mutual disarmament. Peacekeepers must be legitimate so that they can act (at least temporarily) as the overarching authority which can guarantee security for all parties, thereby bridging the security dilemma and increasing the chance of mutual disarmament and peace.

6. *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, pp. 33-34.

7. Connie Peck, ed., *On Being the Special Representative of the Secretary General, Collection of Interviews with Former SRSG's*, New York: United Nations Institute for Training and Research, 2006. Peck's work provides a good overview of the contention among scholars of the two extremes.

8. Richard K. Betts, "The Delusion of Impartial Intervention," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 6, December 1994, pp. 20-33. Betts uses the Serbian case as an example where the intervener (the United States) decided to be both impartial and limited in its intervention. This paradoxically created a problem because local actors ended up with roughly similar capabilities (which is the goal of the intervention) and refused to settle the conflict since they knew that their tactical skirmishes for strategic advantage would not be punished to the point of collapse by the intervener. Betts also uses the case of the UNTAC in Cambodia as a benchmark for successful operations based on unlimited intervention. According to Betts, the UNTAC overpowered the local actors, demobilized the bellig-

erents and took over important civilian functions. He argues this is a case of unlimited intervention and by doing so the UNTAC is impartial (since it does things its own way). Betts maintains that the UNTAC is an example where the more unlimited an intervention is, the more impartial it can be and the more successful will peacekeepers be in ending the conflict. Betts brilliantly analyzes the dilemma faced by peacekeeping missions; impartiality and the level of intervention are always problematic for peacekeepers. They tend to think that there is a magic solution that can balance these two requirements. Betts dismisses such wishful thinking and argues for a radical solution: A peacekeeping mission will likely succeed if the intervention is unlimited. Yet, despite its analytical power, Betts' argument suffers from various problems as developed in this monograph.

9. Peck, p. 19.

10. *Ibid.*

11. *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, pp. 53-54.

12. Peck, p. 120, see the box, "You can imagine a night we had!" detailing the way the force commander dealt with a rumor during the UNAMSIL mission in Liberia. Principles of conventional war such as "surprise" ultimately led the force commander to take actions without consulting with the SRSG. The force commander later resigned amid the scandal which could have severely damaged the mission's reputation had it not been for the SRSG's timely response. The contributing country decided to withdraw all its troops despite the offer to replace the force commander by another person from the same country.

13. *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, pp. 34-35.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-36.

17. Tobias C. Berkmans and Victoria K. Holt, *The Impossible Mandate? Military Preparedness, The Responsibility to Protect and Modern Peace Operations*, Washington, DC: The Henry L. Simpson Center, 2006, p. 83.

18. *Ibid.* Berkmans and Holt provide an extensive list.

19. Stephen John Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 2, Autumn 1997, p. 5.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.* Stedman's analysis and conclusions pose some issues. First, it is hard to determine a priori the motivations, objectives, and plans of any spoiler type. The exact type of a spoiler can often only be determined with the benefit of hindsight and with actions appraised after the fact. Information often is not available in real-time for peacekeepers to make such distinctions. Challengers too often exhibit behaviors that are consistent with more than one type of spoiler. Motivations are often complex and the real motivation is not necessarily obvious. One may even observe the position of a spoiler changing over time as he weighs his opportunities and risks. (See below for the reinterpretation of the Khmer Rouge's motivation.) Second, even if we can determine the types of spoilers, they cannot be analyzed apart from the specific political context they find themselves in. Preceding events, current context, and changing concerns about the future shape and inform a spoiler's decisions and actions. Stedman implicitly assumes that every spoiler is a monolithic group. While this has a basis of truth, individual personalities and internal factions within parties to the conflict create discord that may hinder or help the peace process. In a study of the Middle East peace process, Wendy Pearlman concludes that because there are many factions in each side, it is hard for the peace process to satisfy everyone and progress is limited accordingly. Wendy Pearlman, "Spoiling Inside and Out: Internal Political Contestation in Middle East Political Process," *International Security*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 2008/09, pp. 70-109.

22. Norodom Sihanouk, *My War with the CIA: The Memoirs of Prince Norodom Sihanouk*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1973. In this book, Prince Sihanouk vehemently defended this view. See also Chantrabot Ros, *La République Khmère: 1970-1975*, Paris, France:

Editions l'Harmattan, 1993. Ros, who was an official under Lon Nol, argued instead that the Americans were largely ignorant and that the coup was mainly the responsibility of Lon Nol's brother, Lon Non, and Prince Sisovath Sirimatak.

23. Ben Kiernan and Taylor Owen, "Bombs Over Cambodia?" *The Walrus*, October 2006, pp. 62-69.

24. Nayan Chanda, *Brother Enemy: The War After the War*, New York: Collier Books, 1986.

25. David Chandler, *Brother Number One: A Political Biography of Pol Pot*, Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1992.

26. Nicholas Regaud, "Le Cambodge dans la Tourmente: Le Troisième Conflit Indochinois, 1978-1991 (*Cambodia Under Fire: The Third Indochina Conflict*), Paris, France: Fondation pour les études de défense nationale: L'Harmattan, 1992.

27. Marie Alexandrine Martin, *Cambodia, A Shattered Society*, Mark W. McLeod, trans., Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994; Michael Vickery "Cambodia, 1975-1982, Boston, MA: South End Press, 1984; Chanda, 1986; Richard Sola, *Le Cambodge de Sihanouk: Espoir, Désillusions et Amertume, 1982-1993* (*Cambodia's Sihanouk: Hope, Disillusionment, and Bitterness*), Paris, France: Sudestasie, 1994.

28. Regaud, 1992.

29. David W. Roberts, *Political Transition in Cambodia, 1991-99: Power, Elitism, and Democracy*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001; Sola, 1994.

30. "Cambodia-UNTAC Mandate," New York: United Nations, available from [www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/untacmandate.html](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/untacmandate.html).

31. *UN Peacekeeping, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s*, William J. Durch, ed., New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, A Henry L. Stimson Center Book, 1996; Roberts.

32. Amitav Acharya, "Cambodia and the Problem of Peace," *The Pacific Review*, 1994, pp. 297-308.

33. Roberts.

34. *Ibid.*; Philip Short, *Pol Pot: Anatomy of a Nightmare*, New York: Henry Holt, 2006.

35. Judy L. Ledgerwood, "UN Peacekeeping Missions: The Lessons from Cambodia." *Asia Pacific*, No. 11, March 1994, pp. 1-10.

36. Berkmans and Holt; Durch; Roberts.

37. Sola.

38. For a timeline of events, see Yasushi Akashi, "The Challenge of Peacekeeping in Cambodia," *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Summer 1994, pp. 204-215. See also Sola.

39. Short.

40. Akashi, p. 215.

41. As will be seen below, this strategy encountered some setbacks when this coalition government broke down in 1997 because of the ambiguous policy toward the Khmer Rouge. The UNTAC left too early to help the new government deal with the Khmer Rouge. The Khmer Rouge became desperate and was willing to ally with any faction in the government to fight off another faction.

42. Martin.

43. Short.

44. Sola.

45. Path-dependency essentially means that some actions are not available for a certain actor. Those unavailable actions are not illogical or impossible but are simply not available for certain actors because of their past actions. The term has its origin in the literature on transition theory in comparative politics.

46. Ledgerwood.

47. This is the dilemma of peacekeeping in Cambodia. As is later evident, on the one hand, Akashi had no way of including the Khmer Rouge in the election with the consent of both Prince Sihanouk and the CPP. Akashi did not include the Khmer Rouge and he contributed to the creation of a coalition government, a large part of which is still functioning today. On the other hand, Akashi made a mistake by not resolving the Khmer Rouge question before leaving. There was no evidence at the time that the Khmer Rouge was weakening and Akashi and the UNTAC left in a hurry, incorrectly mistaking the Khmer Rouge's election boycott as a weakness.

48. In a study of spoilers in the Middle East, Pearlman, 2008/09, like Stedman, defined spoilers as parties which seek to gain power by undermining the peace process. Stedman was quite explicit in that he classified as spoilers only those actors whose "goal" is to undermine the peace process; thus, under his definition, bandits and other armed groups whose negative effects on the peace process are incidental rather than intentional would not be classified as spoilers. Thus, spoilers are defined by their "intention" to undermine the peace process. Stedman does not consider the possibility that the belligerents too can perform such actions. There is a fine line between spoiling and political maneuvering. As a result, conventional wisdom has difficulty in assessing parties which do not want to undermine the peace process but perform actions that, if unanswered, might threaten the peace process. The question here is whether the peacekeeper sticks to the exact wording of the mandate or is willing to find a negotiated solution. Political maneuvers by conflicting parties seek to stretch the mandate to get such a compromised solution, but are these "spoiling behaviors" or a logical part a political process?

49. Sola.

50. *Ibid.*

51. Roberts.

52. Betts, pp. 20-33.

53. Roberts.

54. Akashi.

55. The main reason for this, and of the strategic stalemate, is the fact that the tempo of the operations need to be synchronized with the seasons: dry and rainy seasons. During the dry season, the SOC could bring mechanized force and air power to bear but most of the gains tended to vanish during the rainy season when the SOC was forced to retreat in a war that degenerated into small-unit combats.

56. For example, in his article, “The Challenge of Peacekeeping in Cambodia,” Akashi does not address it.

57. Short.

58. Akashi, p. 207.

59. One caveat here is that this rule may not apply to an ethnically heterogeneous country where people tend to coalesce around ethnic identity and such bias by the SRSG could potentially create racial discrimination. In Cambodia, it worked because Cambodia is an ethnically homogenous country. Political consideration is a matter of judgment on the part of the SRSG.

60. Richard Ned Lebow, *Between Peace and War, The Nature of International Crisis*, Baltimore, MD, and London, UK: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981.

61. The main Khmer Rouge stronghold was in Pailin, an area known for its diamond deposits. There was no accurate data as to the volume of the deposits, but they were not believed to have been extensive and it is also believed that the Khmer Rouge had already exhausted the resources during the long years of civil war. Clear evidence that the Khmer Rouge was desperate for money is the fact that they resorted to kidnapping of foreigners for ransom as opposed to indiscriminately killing them as in earlier periods.

62. Ambassador Hammaberg’s report is available from [daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N97/277/90/PDF/N9727790.pdf?OpenElement](http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N97/277/90/PDF/N9727790.pdf?OpenElement). On p. 12, there was a brief discussion on the diverging views between the UN report and the protest from Prime Minister Hun Sen over the use of the term “coup d’état.” A rebuttal from the Cambodian government over the use of the term is available from [www.embassy.org/cambodia/pressrelease/press97/1102.htm](http://www.embassy.org/cambodia/pressrelease/press97/1102.htm).

63. Roberts provided a good account of the scholarly debates on whether the 1997 action was a “coup d'état” or simply a series of escalating events.

64. Sola.

65. Clausewitz, Carl von, *On War*, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, eds. and trans., Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976, Revised 1984.

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